# NATIONAL REVIEW

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January 4, 1956

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF OPINION


## *The Old 'New Yorker'*

JOHN ABBOT CLARK

*Articles and Reviews by* · · · · JULES MONNEROT

ISABEL PATERSON · ARTHUR BLISS LANE · RUSSELL KIRK

L. BRENT BOZELL · JAMES BURNHAM · WILLIAM S. SCHLAMM


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# *from* WASHINGTON *straight*

A NEWSLETTER

SAM M. JONES

A L'Ouest Rien de Nouveau

With no hopeful signs for the New Year and the memory of grievous disillusionment in 1955, the Administration faces a worsening foreign relations outlook with a call for a bigger dose of foreign aid. Whether Congress will stand hitched for an increase in the international giveway from 2.7 to 5 billion dollars—or for any increase— depends on the President's remarkable powers of persuasion. The significant factor, however, is the Administration's continued reliance on the Gold Cure as a panacea for global troubles, despite all the evidence that it is impoverishing the U. S. while American prestige abroad steadily declines.

Come One, Come All

Charles Eustis Bohlen, U. S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, is being blamed in some quarters for the trusting attitude with which American officials bounced into the Geneva trap. Other sources contend that Mr. Bohlen warned against premature jubilation, but rumors of his resignation persist. The most startling report to date was heard on a recent CBS radio news program in which the analyst said that Mr. Bohlen might retire from the State Department to run for the Republican Presidential nomination!

No Rest for Lyndon Johnson

Some of Senator Lyndon Johnson's friends would like to see him forego the Majority Leadership in the interest of his health, but he is determined to retain the grueling job at which he has achieved such conspicuous success. Backed by physicians' assurances that he has completely recovered from the heart attack of last summer, Johnson wants to push his thirteen-point legislative program—with especial emphasis on the controversial bill to remove natural gas from Federal Power Commission jurisdiction. This may be the first big fight of the new session.

Free Enterprise vs. FPC

The nation's sixth largest industry, the natural gas business—which supplies about one-fourth of the country's industrial energy—is seeking to free itself from the yoke of federal price control. The fight began in June 1954 when the Supreme Court (by a five-to-three decision) gave the FPC jurisdiction to fix the price of natural gas at the well-head, wherever any of it would find its way into interstate commerce. Independent producers immediately called upon Congress to restate what has long been considered its intent: that federal regulation should not extend to the exploration and gathering phase. In February 1955, the President's Committee on Energy Supplies and Resources Policy recommended that the federal government should not control the production, the processing, or sale, prior to entry into an interstate pipeline. This provision was incorporated in the Harris Bill which passed the House late in the last session. The almost identical Fulbright Bill did not reach the Senate Floor last year, but is expected to be called up in the early days of the new session.

Not Disloyal—Just Dumb

Some Republicans are grateful to former President Truman for keeping the record of Democratic foreign policy burning. Mr. Truman, who focuses his bitter wrath on Vice President Nixon, recently declared that "during the 1952 campaign Nixon called every member of the Democratic Party a traitor and at that time I was head of the party." Mr. Nixon has not as yet replied, but the charge has been repeatedly "deplored" by other Republican leaders (including the President). An analysis of Nixon's speeches during the 1952 and 1954 campaigns discloses that the Vice President accused Democratic leaders of incredibly poor judgment in the face of specific warnings by such authorities as the FBI, but that he made no charge of treason or disloyalty. A list of quotations from Nixon speeches, reprinted by the Democratic National Committee, purports to show that Nixon impugned the integrity of Democratic leaders. But a comparison with the full text, as compiled by Gould Lincoln of the Washington Star, reveals that the Vice President was not attacking the patriotism of the opposition. In no case did Mr. Nixon use the phrase "party of treason," or refer to Truman, Stevenson, or any other party leader as disloyal.



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A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF OPINION

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# *The WEEK*

**The United States Government** is trying to rival the Ford Foundation in philanthropy. It is proposed that we more or less double our give-away program lest, to quote Mr. Chester Bowles, it be said that in the middle of the twentieth century freedom died of a balanced budget. We continue to rely on the stomach theory of Communism. Foreign aid is Bipartisanship's substitute for a foreign policy.

**In Stevens County,** Washington, hard by the government's Grand Coulee Dam, the voters recently decided by a majority of more than seven to three to sell their twenty-year-old public utility plant to a private company. It is perhaps the absence of progressive education that led to this atavistic relapse into ancient superstitions about freedom and enterprise.

**Mr. Max Ascoli** of the *Reporter*, whose credentials as a spokesman for Liberalism are unimpeachable, comments on the Administration's accomplishments: "For three years the Republicans have been engaged in giving the nation their own rendition of the New Deal—somewhat flabby, but with strikingly few variations from the original . . . . The Republicans have been catching up with the reforms of the New Deal, and through their grudging acceptance, have been incorporating them into the living constitution of the land." Mr. Ascoli is correct. The revolution, as Mr. Garet Garrett put it, was.

**Official Washington circles,** admittedly in the dark about the political nature of Brazil's new Kubitschek-Goulart regime (see issue of Dec. 21), are whistling hard to keep their courage up. The experts, according to a *New York Herald Tribune* dispatch from Washington, stress that Senhor Kubitschek "did not campaign for" the Communist vote—though he received it, and would not have been elected without it. As for the Vice-President elect, João Goulart, "officials in Washington" describe him as "an opportunist who used the Communists merely to win at the polls." This seems to qualify him as a trustworthy ally in the modern mode.

**The firing of** Dr. Herbert Fuchs by American University after Dr. Fuchs gave such valuable information to the House Committee on Un-American Activities about his past involvement in the Communist conspiracy is shocking. We learn on good authority



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that the president of American University, Mr. Hurst R. Anderson, led Dr. Fuchs and Congressman Walters to believe that there would be no academic retaliation against Fuchs for helping the Government of the United States track down its enemies. Indeed, we are told that President Anderson *urged* Fuchs to cooperate with the Committee. Yet Mr. Anderson has made no public statement to explain the dismissal. NATIONAL REVIEW is today writing to a prominent member of the board of trustees of American University who has pronounced convictions on matters pertaining to loyalty and security, to academic freedom, and guilt by association. We will publish our letter to Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, and his reply to it, in due course. And we will report further on the mysterious persecution of Dr. Fuchs.

**Writes our London** correspondent, Mr. F. A. Voigt: "There has been a slight ripple of alarm amongst newspaper-owners here over the return of Dr. John from Communist Germany. What if Burgess and Maclean return from Russia? It is not at all clear that they have committed any indictable offense (except, perhaps, breach of contract) and nobody knows what, if anything, could be done with them if they were to return. The newspapers have assailed them as traitors, drunkards, homosexuals and so on—all of it true, of course—but what if, on returning, they issue writs for libel? Were they to do so and win, they would collect damages amounting to tens of thousands." Which would serve the press jolly well right for passing judgment on men who have not been proved guilty.

## *Rights Civil and Uncivil*

On December 15 there was celebrated the 164th anniversary of the ratification of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, known popularly but misleadingly as "the Bill of Rights." Our Liberal oracles, ever alert for an appropriate occasion to spread confusion, made it a gala festival. At a self-styled "Leadership Conference," Senator Herbert Lehman and New York Councilman Stanley Isaacs sounded forth with routine nonsense. Accepting the annual Stephen Wise Award, the doughty Elmer Davis, smiting the security system hip and thigh, mapped out the shortest route to national suicide.

Now we are all for the first ten amendments, and we welcome this Constitutional fervor of our Liberal colleagues. We wish that they weren't quite so choosy in their praise. They are strong for Amendment I (free speech), the anti-self-incrimination clause of Amendment V, and a clause or two of Amendments IV and VI. But somehow they never worry much about Amendment II ("the right of the people to keep and bear arms not be infringed"); or the end of Amendment V ("nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property [sic], without due process of law; nor shall private property [sic] be taken for public use without just compensation"). They are remarkably selective in their interpretation of Amendment IV's affirmation that "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects . . . shall not be violated." It depends, apparently, on whether the people in question are bankers or Communists.

Our Liberals seem to have forgotton that, as the Fathers understood things, basic human rights are natural or God-given, not the product of any document or government. It was the people who, for certain stated purposes, granted a government certain limited rights, not a government that graciously conferred rights on the people. The many professors of history in the Liberal army for some reason fail to remind us that the avowed and well understood purpose of the first ten amendments was not to create rights but to restrict and circumscribe the power of the central government to interfere with citizens.

And, if we may judge by their act and utterance, most of our Liberals have neglected even to read the astringent message of Amendment X: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

## *The Senator from Missouri*

Senator Thomas C. Hennings is (to put it mildly) getting reckless. He is the Democrat from Missouri, one will recall, who does *not* want to be shown; and if he *is* shown that there is a Communist conspiracy, and that it aims to penetrate the government, he wants to abolish the methods by which he *has* been shown. The Hennings Senate Subcommittee has not yet completed its investigation, and a competent chairman of a committee would therefore be most reluctant to prejudge the forthcoming findings. Not so Mr. Hennings. "The principal accomplishments of the recent hearings," announced the hasty Missourian the other day, have "been to reveal the snowballing nature of the Government's loyalty-security programs and their extension to areas having no genuine relation to the nation's military security."

"The Civil Service Commission," Senator Hennings shouted, "maintains some 2,000,000 dossiers, or files of derogatory information, in addition to an index file of some 5,000,000 names. . . . Such information goes into charges that may be evaluated—but without the rules of due process—at security board hearings."

Seldom have so many innuendos been pressed into a couple of sentences. The 2,000,000 dossiers and 5,000,000 names in the file happen to be an absolutely



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indispensable tool of *any* security system—and were, in fact, for the most part accumulated by Senator Hennings' party when it was in power. If the Senator can prove that the people who have to *evaluate* that information are incompetent, he had better *produce* the evidence. He has not done so. Instead, the Senator undertakes to scare the American public with the nightmare of Gestapo-like secret dossiers in the hands of government.

Senator Hennings, in short, is out to abolish, if he can, the security system (because, he claims, it sacrifices the citizen's constitutional rights "on the altar of bureaucratic authoritarianism"). His is a carefully planned campaign, not just an over-stimulated speaker's sudden improvisation. About two months ago, Senator Hennings demanded publicly three changes in our security program: that we no longer take a man's Communist-front associations into consideration when deciding whether he should hold a sensitive government position; that we abolish the "system of secret informers," i.e., disclose the names of undercover FBI agents (and thereby destroy their usefulness); that we discard the "reasonable doubt" security standard, i.e., consider a man entitled to a government job unless his membership card in the Communist Party is physically produced.

What motivates Senator Hennings to slash at the country's security system, we do not know. (And we intend to survey his motivations in greater detail next week.) But we do know what he is *doing*. And we shall try to show the people of Missouri that a Senator from this delightfully skeptical state belongs, of rights, among the stern defenders of U.S. security.

## *What Tune for the Voice?*

The United States Information Agency, which operates the Voice of America and our other official instruments of foreign propaganda, has announced that it will seek a 50 per cent increase in its budget, to a total of $125 million. Amid all the billions the amount is so paltry that it seems picayune to cavil. Still, we hope that Congress, just for the record, will pose two or three questions before granting the appropriation. For example:

1. Just what is the objective of our foreign propaganda? Is it to help defend the threatened security of our country by exposing and attacking international Communism and Soviet imperialism, and by stimulating the nations enslaved by Moscow to persist in their struggle toward future liberation? Or is the objective, as the *New York Times* recently declared USIA practice to have, in fact, been over the past two years (see NATIONAL REVIEW, No. 3), to promote friendship, solidarity and coexistence with the existing Communist regimes and their ruling elites? Do we need an official information agency to tell the world how much we admire Soviet musicians, artists, visiting firemen—and generals?

2. What sort of people, with what sort of ideas, are running the USIA? Do they know anything about the Soviet Union, Communism, modern history? Do they know anything about propaganda directed to foreign nations? Is USIA's Acting Director Abbott Washburn's new program of a TV "living picture of the United States" typical of what is to be done with the $125 million? We note that this series will begin with "roads and traffic in the United States." This is no doubt a burning international issue, and we were glad to read that one of the languages dubbed in will be Arabic. Mr. Washburn is evidently resolved to bring his message right onto the television screen of every peasant household throughout the troubled Near East.

3. Can the chiefs of USIA supply a sample of one (1) nation where the operations of USIA under the prevailing directives have produced results that have demonstrably and significantly benefited the interests of the United States?

4. In short, is there any point in having an "information program" if we haven't anything to say?

## *Two Geneva Spirits*

The principle on which the *New York Times* regulates the hospitality of its letters column has always been obscure to us, though we assume it to be an application of the basic "fit to print" axiom that the *Times* long ago adopted as its hallmark. Our eye was struck by two lengthy communications that occupied the lead position during two days of a recent week: one from Professor Theodore Brameld, now visiting at the University of Puerto Rico; the second from Professor Frederick L. Schuman, of Williams College.

Professor Brameld is a specialist in philosophy and "education," as it is called; Professor Schuman, in political science and international affairs. By impressive past performance (though this the *Times* did not see fit to recall to its readers), each can claim eminence within his field as an apologist for Soviet behavior and Communist ideas. When, therefore, they feel it appropriate to issue new bulletins, via the *Times* letters column, there is good reason to hearken.

Professor Schuman made it his mission to chide the *Times* itself for having suggested, in an editorial, that the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was a double cross, and that Messrs. Bulganin and Khrushchev were going a bit far in their Asian speeches when they accused the Western powers of having started World War Two. "Belated charges and countercharges can serve no present purposes," concludes the charitable Mr. Schuman. "The only moral of the record, surely,



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is . . . that collective security is impossible without a concert of the great powers, such as was initially envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations." Ergo, presumably, Geneva meetings ad infinitum.

Professor Brameld moved in on another but not unconnected front. He just wanted to say (and the *Times*, on its mysterious principle, gave him nearly a full column to say it) that the White House Conference on Education was just too, too democratic—"A model of the democratic process that ought to be widely emulated."

This particular democratic process was the method of "group dynamics" to which Mr. Bozell gave his attention two issues ago. Mr. Brameld can take comfort in the fact that, as a model, it has been doing rather well of late, even before the White House Conference was thought of. When its logic is drawn all the way out, the "democracy" of "group dynamics" is identical in concept to the "democracy" of what Communists call "popular democracy," i.e., a process for organizing public acceptance of, or submission to, the policies of a ruling elite.

## *Mr. Khrushchev Boasts*

"If you want technical know-how," Mr. Khrushchev told India, "ask us." What he was saying, with a bit of braggadocio, was that the Communists had acquired all the available knowledge of the productive arts and the skills necessary to put that knowledge to use. What he implied was that their productive capacity had attained a corresponding state of completion. We can accept his statement; but the implied inference is subject to doubt.

Most of the technical know-how of which Mr. Khrushchev boasts has always been available to the Russians in the capitalist world, where it was developed. The little that was kept under lock and key (that is, the atomic secrets) they helped themselves to by somewhat unethical means. They also had at their disposal the knowledge and skills of captive scientists and technicians. In their anxiety to improve their output, they borrowed all the arts of capitalistic production. The question is: has their productive capacity kept pace with their avidity for technical know-how?

Technical know-how is not the cause of abundance. It is only its result. It springs from the unquenchable urge of the human being to better his circumstances and broaden his horizon. But, if the better life does not result from these ways and means (the sciences and the arts), the urgency to acquire them dwindles. That is to say, if there is no profit from technical know-how, it will not be employed, even if known. Why should the Russian peasant be interested in learning how to use a combine if he cannot share in the abundance of wheat that comes from it?

Where private property prevails, technical know-how will materialize. Where it is abolished, technical know-how is a borrowed bauble.

## *Communism in the Press*

The Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security is midway in an investigation of Communism among New York newspapermen. The investigation drew public attention last summer when CBS commentator Winston Burdett testified to having belonged to a Communist cell in the city staff of the now defunct *Brooklyn Eagle*. A few days ago the Subcommittee, meeting in New York, heard some sixty witnesses in secret, a majority of them apparently past or present employees of the *New York Times*. Senator Jenner, who presided over some of the sessions, declined to say when public hearings will be held. There is, needless to say, considerable tension in newspaper circles, particularly in New York. But cries of "witch hunt" are encouragingly infrequent. Only the *Daily Worker* disputes that the hearings have been models of discretion and sobriety.

## *Arise, Ye Prisoners . . .*

At the AFL-CIO merger convention in New York, a copy of the official *AFL News-Reporter* was placed at each delegate's seat. A story on page seven described a study of unemployed workers in Pittsburgh made by Duquesne University in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Unemployment Security. The headline and first two paragraphs read:

> ***Idle Worker Has Tough Time Trying to "Exist"***
>
> An unemployed worker struggling to eke out an existence from jobless benefit payments faces an almost impossible situation. He's faced with spending substantially more for food, shelter and other items in the family budget than he can draw in benefits.
>
> Unless he dips into his savings, Government bonds or borrows on his insurance, from banks or other credit sources, he can't make it.

In all fairness, the AFL newspaper should do something to update labor's marching song, and its central exhortation: "Arise, ye prisoners of starvation . . ." All it involves is substituting for starvation, "savings, Government bonds and insurance," and making the line scan.



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## *Oasis in Morristown*

One grey afternoon early this month, sixteen members of the executive board of the Morristown, New Jersey, Thomas Jefferson Public High School Division of the Parent-Teacher Association met in solemn and plenipotentiary session and ratified the dismissal as Program Chairman of Mrs. Betsy Jane Bramhall, mother of four young children. For so severe and unusual a punishment there was, as one would assume, great provocation. Mrs. Bramhall on one occasion had taken a personal stand against a particular aggression by a United Nations group, and on another had brought to Morristown a speaker who devoted a minute or two of her talk to criticizing UNESCO. "Her actions," ruled the executive board, "have not been conducive in promoting the objectives of the PTA."

Much seems to hinge on the question whether discussion of United Nations activity constitutes controversial political activity; for such activity is expressly forbidden to officers in the PTA by the New Jersey Congress of the PTA. The speaker who took off after UNESCO was not brought to Morristown to do any such thing. Mrs. Bramhall points out that if the PTA is entitled to have an official representative on the Morristown United Nations Day Committee, the PTA has room for those who take stands *against* the United Nations.

What touched off the controversy was the play. Mrs. Bramhall returned home one night this fall to find her eighth-grade daughter rehearsing lines for a school play which sounded very strange to the ear. The play depicted an episode in the life of a small nation, wrested from the jaws of despotism by a team of unarmed but very talkative United Nations economic and social experts. Overjoyed by their good fortune, the liberated citizens (the children) deliver a paean to the United Nations by singing as the curtain falls some very life-adjusted stanzas, such as:

> Come Brothers, Brothers Listen All
> To the Voice of Liberty!
> United under God we stand
> Ever Vigilant and Free
>
> Never will the despot rule
> O'er any land of ours,
> For united we stand or fall
> Beneath each nation's stars.

Mrs. Bramhall, a stout Episcopalian, protested the inappropriateness of the play to just about everybody she could buttonhole. Her point was that too many countries in the United Nations "deny God and enslave men" to make the verses realistic. The superintendent of schools argued that there was nothing to be done since an independent committee—the UN Day Committee—had hired the school hall. Mrs. Bramhall asked, "Have they hired my daughter?"

She went on to make her protest public, by writing a formal letter to the Board of Education, and sending a copy to the local newspaper. That action triggered her dismissal.

There is not a trace of bitterness in Mrs. Bramhall. We know that, having spent several hours with her. She is a most remarkable woman. Unlike most controversialists, she likes just about everybody. She likes the principal of her school, she likes the superintendent, she likes the president of the PTA, she is devoted to the eighth-grade teacher, and she is particularly in *love* with the Thomas Jefferson School. She has no intention of exploiting her victimization by fomenting a revolution against the local Philistines. She has lost her fight. Just the same, it's comforting to know where in Morristown, New Jersey, four children will *not* grow up as cliché-dominated Citizens of the World.

## *Mr. Clark on 'The New Yorker'*

The feeling of the editors of the REVIEW toward their readers is, as one might expect, one of tender solicitude. Occasionally we are jarred by a discouraging letter ("take my name off the mailing list of your obscene publication"); and we get a letter every now and then of the most heartening kind ("you have affected the intellectual climate in which we and our children live"). It is on such occasions that we overflow with good will toward our readers, toward the world we live in, and even toward some of the most tireless irritants that inhabit it. *The New Yorker,* for instance.

As a holiday gift, for friend and foe, we devote a large part of this issue to a non-polemical article which we deem one of the most knowing pieces of research we have seen. Professor John Abbot Clark of Michigan State University, masked as a "Modern," comes up with evidence of such nature as will shock those who have thought of *The New Yorker,* as we have done (and may again, after Mr. Clark's spell wears off), as primarily the instrument of such aggressive misanthropes as—No; we won't mention names. Just this one time, we'll let it go, lest we distract attention from the observations of a persuasive and ingenious dissenter who saw in the old *New Yorker* of Harold Ross an almost subversive effort to preserve intact against the ravages of a militant and ravenous modernism the tokens of hope and truth. It may be that Mr. Clark, the critic, is wrong. But if he is, it doesn't make much difference. For in his researches he stumbled on beauty, and who is to say that what matters, under the circumstance, is whether beauty was intended?



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# The Liberal Line...

WILLMOORE KENDALL

Let's take it easy this week, and content ourselves with a brief go at the following simple question: What can we learn, from the recent output of the Liberal propaganda machine, about current Liberal morality?

One of Mr. Lippmann's latest columns fits our inquiry—as they say in Spanish—as the ring the finger. For in it Mr. Lippmann is engaged precisely in an examination of conscience, and thus has morality on his mind.

Not, of course, his own conscience, but rather, as it happens, General Chiang Kai-shek's conscience, which, Mr. Lippmann clearly feels, ought to be hurting mighty bad for what its owner has just gone and done. I paraphrase:

General Chiang has just sought to block the admission of 18 states to the UN. Spuriously putting himself forward as the champion of morality against "expediency and immorality," he has denounced the "package deal" to admit the 18 as a violation of "righteous principle".

It was *not* a violation of righteous principle. It was not, first, because to say so is to say that virtually all the governments of the world had conspired to do an immoral deed, which is silly.

It was not, secondly, because admitting Outer Mongolia would have been not immoral but moral. Outer Mongolia's "presence" in the UN—let us concede this if we must—would be an "evil thing." But to admit it to membership was the only way to get in a "large number of highly eligible and desirable states." If, moreover, we look closely at the "realities behind governments," we find that several states in which "evil things prevail" have already been admitted, and without anyone's being "injured or contaminated by them." So why be squeamish about admitting yet another?

It was not, thirdly, because in a "universal society like the UN" *the* ruling principle should be "universality of membership." In a word: General Chiang's conscience should be hurting him because he has refused to subordinate himself to the new morality of the UN world, whose decalogue appears to run, in part, as follows:

1. Thou shalt discover what is moral by counting heads in the UN.
2. Thou shalt recognize that an evil thing becomes a moral thing if a desirable result is accomplished by means of it.
3. Thou shalt not let thy conscience, nor thy unfashionable instinct of self-preservation, get in the way of "universality of membership," this is the supreme good.
4. As a general proposition, thou shalt not be squeamish about the company thou keepest.

## *Whither Lippmann?*

The major points in the remainder of his article are these:

—Formosa's title to represent China at the UN is "dubious";

—the UN majority believes that since Chiang's government is not in fact the government of China, "it should not continue to speak for China";

—we have managed to save Chiang from the UN majority only because our allies have been stringing along until the U.S. elections are over;

—we cannot keep on saving him, once the elections are over;

—his days on the Security Council are "numbered", and most likely we can't even get him kept on as a member of the General Assembly;

And while we are at it, we might notice where Mr. Lippmann is going with all this—and, predictably, carrying the Liberal line with him. The rest of his column says this:

—when Chiang finds himself expelled from the General Assembly, he will have only himself to blame.

Red China, you will note, and the question of its admission to the UN, are not so much as mentioned. Mr. Lippmann prefers to talk about other things: the well-deserved punishment of trouble-makers, or the principle that we must do business only with governments that are governments de facto. Mr. Lippmann, unlike General Chiang, subordinates himself to the new morality without difficulty.

## *Alsop and Twining*

And now let us see what we can learn from an Alsop piece called "Bitterness in the Pentagon." It says in effect this:

The Air Force Chief of Staff, General Twining, believes that 140 to 150 air wings are "absolutely required for the defense of the United States." He can, on present appropriations, maintain only 50 really modern wings in "top operational shape." Considerations of security are being subordinated to considerations of economy. He would like nothing better than to tell a congressional committee all about it. And if he *does* tell a committee all about it, there will be "something of an explosion," with "political implications."

Note—for this is Liberal morality as it is *lived*—that

—the piece both says and doesn't say that the U. S. does not have the air force "absolutely required" for its defense;

—it *says it*—in the sense that it claims the authority of the one man who ought to know;

—it *says it*—in the sense that a highly impressionable reader might come away from it with the impression that the U. S. is, militarily, at the mercy of the Soviet Union;

—it *does not say it*—in the sense that the Alsops do not urge that inference themselves;

—it *does not say it*—in the sense that the Alsops do not demand that something be done about it;

—it *does not say it*—in the sense that all the Alsops see in it is a possible domestic political ruckus, and not, for example, the defeat or even the occupation of the United States by the Soviet Union.

Well, the Alsops warned us, didn't they? They scooped everybody, didn't they? And the man who thinks it is the journalist's job to drive points home, even if people might lose some sleep over them, is merely the prisoner of traditional morality. Now isn't he?



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# *The Old New Yorker'*

**Mr. Clark exposes the heresies against 'Modernism' perpetrated during the thirties by 'The New Yorker,' furtive friend of Humanism . . .**

JOHN ABBOT CLARK

Christianity proffered a fixed revelation of absolute, unchanging Being and Truth; and the revelation was elaborated into a system of definite rules and ends for the direction of life. Hence "morals" were conceived as a code of laws, the same everywhere and at all times. The good life was one lived in fixed adherence to fixed principles. In contrast with all such beliefs, the outstanding fact in all branches of natural science is that to exist is to be in process, in change. Nevertheless, although the idea of movement and change has made itself at home in the physical sciences, it has had comparatively little influence on the popular mind as the latter looks at religion, morals, economics, and politics. In these fields it is still supposed that our choice is between confusion, anarchy, and something fixed and immutable. It is assumed that Christianity is the final religion; Jesus the complete and unchanging embodiment of the divine and human. It is assumed that our present economic regime, at least in principle, expresses something final, something to endure—with, it is incidentally hoped, some improvements in detail. It is assumed, in spite of evident flux in the actual situation, that the institutions of marriage and family that developed in medieval Europe are the last and unchanging word.

—JOHN DEWEY, *Living Philosophies* (1931), pp. 25-26.

The Humanist fails to see that life is not so ascetic an affair that men may brood on ethical "choices." They have not indeed, under modern conditions of living, time to engage in abstract spiritual exercises of any kind, and if the values which are to be regarded as valuable to man and society do not have a natural and inevitable continuity with action, they are bound to remain unobserved and consequently trivial and unimportant—noble and amusing anachronisms.

—C. HARTLEY GRATTAN, *The Critique of Humanism* (1930), p. 25.

It will be now my unpleasant duty to expose the alarming extent of *The New Yorker's* "fixed," Humanistic adherence to "fixed," outmoded ethical codes, and its profound sympathy with long-exploded religious "immutabilities." Judged by the most enlightened, most up-to-date thinking of our Modern authorities on these matters, this supposedly smart and cynical mouthpiece of Café Society seems to be quite simple-mindedly, almost fanatically bent on trying to persuade its readers to "live by old Ethicks and the classical Rules of Honesty"; to "put no new names or notions upon Authentic Virtues and Vices"; to "think not that Morality is Ambulatory." Like More and Babbitt (and old Sir Thomas Browne), the magazine has been saying to us Moderns over the years—and in decidedly blunt, shamelessly admonitory fashion, too—that if we "cannot imitate Job, yet come not short of Socrates."

Unlike John Dewey and C. Hartley Grattan, unlike nearly all of our Modern intellectuals for that matter, *The New Yorker* assumes that the Moral Law is "fixed and immutable"; that Christianity "is the final religion"; that Jesus is "the complete and unchanging embodiment of the divine and the human," etc., etc. In emulation of their Humanist mentors, the *New Yorker* people have put in no telling how many dark watches of the night brooding on "ethical 'choices.'"

I wish I could say that, considering how much old-fashioned ethical and religious "lore" has worked its way into the pages of *The New Yorker,* it speaks well for us Moderns that we have been so little affected by its "spiritual exercises" in prose and verse. I wish I could say that, despite the magazine's efforts all these years to alienate us from our Freuds and Deweys and lead us out of the twentieth century back to Athens 400 B.C. or to Jerusalem early A.D., we are still unreconstructedly, incorruptibly Modern enough to prefer Lord Russell's Revised Version of the Ten Commandments to the Authorized Version of Moses.

In all honesty, though, I can't. There is no denying, of course, that all during the Long Decade (1933-1945) we were almost completely immune to *The New Yorker's* unremitting endeavors to moralize our weeks. But how much credit do we really deserve for so preserving our Modernity? Not much, I'm afraid. The distressing truth is that most of us Moderns (and I can't repeat it too often) have been strangely oblivious all these years of what the magazine has been driving at.

## *The Ethical Record*

The cruel truth is—and cruel as it is, I only hope the revelation of it will not come too late to save Modernism from its two deadliest enemies, itself and *The New Yorker*—that there was actually no reason at all for us Moderns having been so incredibly blind to the real character of the magazine. What's more, we have been reading it not just once in a while on an infrequent visit to the dentist, but regularly, conscientiously, week by week, year after year. And for moral rigor and spiritual conviction, this *New Yorker* magazine matches, when it doesn't surpass, the intensity of the earlier Humanists and the later Christians.

Let us begin with the ethical record. For a starter, consider the magazine's Amusing (or Funny) Coincidence Dept. Most of us good Moderns have always taken the title quite literally. In this fast-moving age, when our statesmen are too preoccupied with world affairs to write their own



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books, speeches and articles, and our business and professional people are too preoccupied with private affairs to write theirs, we Moderns are pretty tolerant and understanding about what in slower times would have been regarded as dishonesty or deceit. And with Ghostwriting now a firmly established, highly respected calling (a number of colleges have already begun to give courses in it), "amusing coincidences" are bound to multiply, becoming before long, no doubt, the generally accepted rule rather than the once-looked-down-upon exception. For that matter, the time may not even be so far off when the inaugural address of the chancellor of one university will tend to read almost word for word like the valedictory remarks of the retiring president of a sister institution.

*The New Yorker,* however, seldom or never views the parallelisms placed under that familiar head as either amusing or coincidental. When Christopher Morley, some years ago, churlishly disclosed to the public that the late Odd McIntyre had long been his most faithful reader and closest imitator—or, to employ Mr. Morley's obsolescent terminology, had been stealing from him—*The New Yorker* jumped at the chance to add its vicarious umbrage to Mr. Morley's Stone-Age rudeness: "Every writer, if he be honest with himself, knows that often his most cherished egg looks suspiciously like one that has been laid before, by somebody else. Our sympathies do not embrace Mr. McIntyre, however. To anyone reading the mass of parallelisms (see the *Saturday Review* for June 29) the guilt of the boy from Gallipolis, Ohio, is clear. Mr. Morley has caught him with his *pince-nez* down. It is not a pretty sight." (July 6, 1935)

For years the magazine carried on a bitter feud with Alexander Woollcott because, good Modern that he was, he saw nothing wrong, toward the end of his life anyway, in endorsing certain products for pay. After the Seagram people had, in Woollcott's winged phrase, "seduced, bribed, and corrupted" him into writing testimonials for them, he dispatched a flushed, ingratiating letter to Eustace Tilley, requesting Seagram's for Christmas. *The New Yorker,* of course, was hurt and incensed to its Puritan marrow, failing dismally to enter into the Yuletide spirit of the suggestion: "Well, the holidays come and go; yet this Christmas of 1936, thanks to your thoughtful note, has been given an unforgettable flavor, has become a season pervaded with the faint, exquisite perfume of well-rotted holly berries. God rest ye and Seagram's merry."

Eight years later, the magazine's stern, rectitudinous attitude toward

this question of testimonials had softened not a jot. For something comparable in severity to the following, one must turn to Irving Babbitt's illiberal castigation of Rousseau for abandoning his five children: ". . . but the point about endorsements, it seems to us, is not merely that the public gets deceived but that the endorser's position deteriorates. We had this out once with the late Alexander Woollcott, who, after almost a lifetime of maintaining his amateur standing as an enthusiast, suddenly turned pro and took money from a motor-car manufacturer, a whiskey concern, and a maker of tennis racquets. 'Why not?' he asked us indignantly when we uttered a mild protest. The answer is now what it was then: to accept pay for approving of something is to render one's opinion suspect. This is particularly bad in the case of writers and artists, whose opinions are valuable and interesting only if they are not for sale." (Apr. 22, 1944)

*The New Yorker* is so utterly out of sympathy with many ways we Moderns have devised of combining business with idealism that it strenuously objected some years ago to a soldier of fortune who had flown for "Spain, China, and Pepsi-Cola."

*"If we had a Socratic remnant, said Irving Babbitt in 1924, "one of its chief concerns would be to give a civilized content to the catchwords that finally govern the popular imagination. The sophist and the demagogue flourish in an atmosphere of vague and inaccurate definition. . . . The demagogue has been justified only too often in his assumption that men may be led, not by their noses, but by their ears as tenderly as asses are. The records of the past reveal that the multitude has frequently been persuaded by a mirage of words that the ship of state was steering a straight course for Eldorado, when it was in reality drifting on a lee-shore; and the multitude has not been apprized of the peril until it was within the very sound of the breakers."*

Sounding, as usual, ever so much like Irving Babbitt, *The New Yorker* once fired the following broadside at Stuart Chase, who, in a way, has been doing for Semantics what Thomas Henry Huxley, "Darwin's Bulldog," did for Evolution:

"Life is mysteriously easy and pleasant in the upper intellectual brackets. Stuart Chase, the Connecticut Adam Smith, has given the government [this was in 1939] a list of 'good' and 'bad' words for the same things—'good' and 'bad' in this case meaning words hopeful or alarming to the taxpayer. Avoid, he told them, such terms as 'debt,' 'government running expenses,' and 'our economy.' Don't, however, say 'mature economy,' which implies an end of growth; say 'expanding economy,' which suggests that the sky is still the limit. We admire this little science, called semantics, and we are trying to adjust it to our own life. No longer do we lie around and waste time; we are conserving our capital resources. Nobody busts anything any more in our house; there is only a certain inevitable depreciation of equipment. The wolf, in fact, has gone away from our door, leaving no more than a small temporary deficit, chargeable to improvements of plant."

After reading the above even a good Modern, unless he were a confirmed Keynesian, with all his neo-fiscal wits about him and very much on his semantic toes, would tend to visualize Mr. Chase, not as Korzybski's Boxer, but as Hayakawa's Mexican Hairless.

Here are some other unmistakable signs of *The New Yorker's* fusty, narrow-minded weakness for old-



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fashioned ethical principles. (How, all during the Long Decade, so many Moderns missed their "unmistakability" is wholly beyond me.) The magazine's treatment, for instance, of Justice Pecora plainly reveals the Christian-Humanistic bases of its thinking:

"The Hines case, after demonstrating that almost all men are vile, rather unexpectedly produced the perfect man. 'My conscience is always clear,' said Justice Pecora, defending his action in declaring a mistrial. Our own conscience a piebald since the spring of 1908, we were a little stunned by this vision of utter serenity, a little reluctant to believe that here at last we were face to face with a soul that had never known guilt. However, we have no reason to doubt Mr. Pecora's word, and we accept him as a twentieth-century Galahad, armored in stainless steel. We admire the Judge, but we don't envy him. Absolute purity is a cold and lonely state and probably rather awkward socially, the completely virtuous man being as unwieldy as a Shetland pony in the average New York drawing room. We are not even sure that it is the ideal state of mind with which to interpret the law, a code sensibly based on the hypothesis of universal corruption." (Sept. 24, 1938)

*Wrote Babbitt, in* The Modern French Criticism: *"'The entertainment of the proposition of depravity,' replies Emerson, 'is the last profligacy and profanation.' Emerson is thus at one with Rousseau in denying intrinsic evil in human nature. . . . he thus 'averts his ken from half of human fate.' This attitude towards the problem of perversity is so contrary to the ascertained facts, so opposed to all hard and clear and honest thinking, that it may compromise gravely in the long run the reputations of all those who have taken it."*

## *More Exacting than Acton*

*The New Yorker* is so naive, so behind our own times in its ethical notions, as to demand more honesty in government and politics. Irving Babbitt—even Lord Acton himself—could hardly have been more exacting. This is what it had to say on the subject back in 1939, when it was possible to view public morality with more calm, realistic, sociologic detachment than it is today, what with congressional huntsmen and old-fashioned moralists up all over America at the moment:

"We were astonished and a little dismayed to read that Harry Hopkins had admitted that he might have been mistaken in making political speeches while working for the WPA. Politicians to a great extent are like toothpaste and soup; they owe their existence to advertising that never concedes less than the superlative. For an office-holder to say that he might have been wrong on a matter of policy is as disturbing as it would be if General Motors advertised that their new models might not be as good as the old ones, or were apt to fall apart on the hills. We think it is very important that our rulers preserve the legend of their infallibility, if only to keep up the standard of their campaigns. We can imagine the Democratic candidate in 1940 saying, 'Baby, what a bust that NRA turned out to be,' and his opponent answering genially, 'That's nothing, brother. *We're* the boys who elected Warren G. Harding.' It would be unusual, we suppose, but not very interesting."

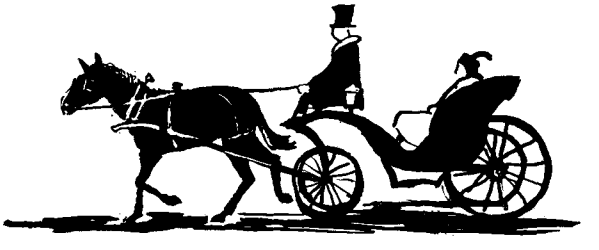
When, in 1939, Stackpole Sons issued their edition of *Mein Kampf*, which paid no royalties to Hitler, *The New Yorker* was ethically infuriated:

". . . As a matter of irony and humanity, of course, it is nice to see the proceeds going to the refugees whose homes were destroyed by the very theories set forth in the book. As a writer ourself, however, we don't like the idea of a publisher getting out of paying royalties to any author, even on the noblest grounds and even if he doesn't make a nickel out of it personally. Also, in spite of the eloquent case which Stackpole Sons have advanced for denying legal protection to a man 'who has himself denied the law,' we can't help feeling that there is something rather dangerous in all this, since it establishes a precedent for keeping people who are under the moral displeasure of the community from being paid for their work. A country that makes getting your wages contingent on holding acceptable political opinions has gone a long way down the same road that Germany went, and if that isn't, in embryo, what Stackpole Sons are doing, we don't know dictatorial methods when we see them. . . ." (Mar. 11, 1939.)

Several years later, *The New Yorker* was shocked (its word, not mine) to learn that "the President's short-wave message to the French people at the moment of the invasion of North Africa was nothing but a phonograph record. Mr. Roosevelt himself revealed that he had made the address some weeks in advance and that what the French people heard was a recording. If we were a Frenchman and had been served this canned food at so important a feast, we would be sore, for although we would know America as admittedly a nation of tin cans, at great moments we would expect her leader to be flesh and blood, not wax. There were probably a lot of good reasons for doing the thing the way it was done (for all we know it may have been the only way possible under the circumstances), but just the same we're worried about this technique and regard it as essentially dangerous. In our modern world there is the strong temptation to do everything with mirrors; but mirrors are cold, and they can easily fog up in the hot bathroom of war. Citizens of the Republic, the following message is *not* transcribed: 'Vive la France!'" (Nov. 21, 1942)

## *Characteristic Examples*

Several years still later, the magazine received another shock which it probably hasn't recovered from to this day. Most Moderns, noticing it at the time, never, in all likelihood, gave the matter a second thought: "We nominate for the bloodthirstiest advertising tieup of 1944 an ad for Little, Brown and Company we saw recently in *Publishers' Weekly*. Discussing Helen MacInnes's new thriller about the Polish underground, the publishers pointed out to the canny bookseller: 'The Russian Army on the soil of Poland won't do this book any harm.' The Battle of Flanders didn't do pop-





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pies any harm, either, eh, Little, Brown?" (Apr. 1, 1944)

At this point, if any Modern remains unconvinced of the accuracy—and seriousness—of the charge made at the beginning, regarding *The New Yorker's* mossbacked, zealot-like advocacy of "old Ethicks and the classical Rules of Honesty," the following citations should dispel all doubts.

Here is a characteristic example of the kind of moral fussiness which categorically marks off *The New Yorker*, not only from our quality monthlies and intellectual weeklies, but from our scholarly journals of philosophy, ethics and religion as well:

"The other night we went to see 'Angels with Dirty Faces,' a good picture though somewhat confusing morally. In it . . . James Cagney is shown as a vicious killer, a more satistfactory man all around than Al Capone and the James Boys put together. Everything, in fact, is fine right up to the end, when Cagney, condemned to the electric chair, pretends to be yellow, in order to fool the reporters and subsequently, the Dead End Kids, who would otherwise have taken up the dirty work where he left it. This turns out all right in the picture, and the disillusioned children slope off to a church. We keep wondering about those Dead End Kids, though. Presumably even they have friends who go to the movies and will tip them off to the real story. How are they going to feel when they learn that they were sucked into morality under false pretenses, miserably tricked by Will Hays and the Warner Brothers?" (Dec. 10, 1938)

Here is another one, equally fussy, equally benighted:

"Often, reading success stories, we are conscious of a strange blurring of moral values; the hero got ahead because he lied. We thought about this the other day when we read in *Showplace*, the magazine they put out up at the Radio City Music Hall, that Irene Dunne got her start in life by claiming that she had studied singing for years when she hadn't at all. In another item, it said that Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., got *his* chance by saying he was eighteen when he was really fourteen. Both these falsehoods were presented as virtues, as stirring examples of American enterprise. We wonder if Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., endorses this wayward philosophy. If he does, we wonder how he explained it to Dr. Fosdick." (Dec. 10, 1938)

*As closely analogous, compare these sentiments of Irving Babbitt, expressed in 1908: "Justice Brewer is reported to have said in a recent address that if the law of love only prevailed in the business world there would be no need of jails, no defaulting bank-cashiers, no over-reaching by individuals and trusts, etc. This is not thinking, but humanitarian reverie. If the world of business is ever governed by any law besides that of the wolf pack, it will not be by the law of love, but by the Ten Commandments, notably the commandment, Thou shalt not steal. . . . One could recently read in the paper of the philanthropies of the richest man in America, and in another column of the same issue of the prosecution of this man for violation of the law. No one need doubt the genuineness of Mr. Rockefeller's desire for service, and there can, of course, be no question of the success of his training for power. Mr. Harriman, again, has shown amazing efficiency in managing the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads, and is also in some respects a sincere helper of his fellow men. Yet a few more Harrimans and we are undone."*—Literature and the American College, pp. 65 ff.

## *Revealing Reply*

Lastly, here is the magazine's reply to a letter from a teacher. Both the letter and the reply are most revealing—disturbingly so as far as we Moderns are concerned, first, because the letter was sent, not to the *Christian Century* or the *Commonweal*, but, mind you, to *The New Yorker;* and, second, because the reply, substantially at any rate, might very well have been written by Irving Babbitt or Paul Elmer More.

"One bleak day last week," we read in "The Talk of the Town" for October 28, 1939, "we had a letter from a professor of law at the University of Arkansas. It was autumnal in tone, a shaken voice in the fall of a sorry year. 'I am wondering how the spiritual outlook reads to *you*,' it said. 'For my part, I have always been of an optimistic bent; but the later years of contact with the world . . . have revealed a deplorable indifference to the things of the spirit. Indeed there looms upon my horizon a definite drift to lower ideals. . . . What sound reasons do you see for entertaining the hope of an early spiritual awakening? Is such a revival desirable? . . . Will you state your general reaction to the moral outlook?' You ask hard questions, Professor. Is Virtue dead, or is she just asleep? How wise, if so, to wake her up? To some extent the pattern of metropolitan behavior is our business, but we haven't, we find, much information on the spiritual outlook around the town. There is nothing in the files, little in the limited experience of our colleagues. Skirts are higher, of course, but the legs are not what they were in 1925 and their emotional impact is slight. Strong drink—at least in our immediate circle, where one man in three is assassinating his liver with various ades and olas—is definitely on the decrease, but whether this indicates a resurgence of morality or merely a decline in virility we cannot say. Sometimes, in a young face in a night club or a restaurant, we think we see the light of a new faith in the things of the spirit, but it is hard to tell which eyes shine for God and which for Zerbe's lens. The voice of idealism is often loud in our ears, but the ideal itself, while high, is also a trifle bloodthirsty, based, it seems to us, on a desire to reform the world according to the gospel of Lenin or Torquemada. . . ."

*Cf. Paul Elmer More* (Shelburne Essays IX, 1915, pp. 208 ff.): *"The actual morals of an age are an extremely complicated and elusive network of facts, and it is only too easy to generalize from incomplete observation. . . . As for our own age, only a fool would dogmatize; we can only balance and surmise. . . . The sensuality of the prevailing music and dancing, the plays that stir the country as organs of moral regeneration, the exaggeration of sex in the clothing seen in the street, are but symptoms more or less ominous to our mind as we do or do not connect them with the regnant theory of ethics. . . . The Roman who gloated over the head of his and the people's enemy lived two thousand years ago, and we think such bloodthirstiness is no longer possible in public life. Yet not much more than a century ago the preaching of social sympathy could send a Lebon and his kind over France with an insatiable lust for killing, complicated with Sadism, while in Paris the leader of the government of the most civilized country of Europe was justifying such a regime on the pious principle that, 'when the sovereign people exercises its power, we can only bow before it; in all it does all is virtue and truth, and no excess, error, or crime is pos-*



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*sible.' The animal is not dead within us, but only asleep. If you think he has been really conquered, read what he has been doing in the Congo and to the Putumayo Indians, or among the redeemers of the Balkan States." In a footnote, More added: "All this was written and printed, I need scarcely say, before the outbreak of the European war. I should not today refer to the Congo and the Putumayo Indians for the savagery underlying civilization."*

Clearly, such a regressive pattern of ethical rectitude as I have just unfolded can rest on nothing less solid and unchanging (solid and unchanging, that is, in the eyes of old-fashioned believers) than Christianity itself. And I would be almost actionably derelict to the cause of Modernism if I attempted to water down or suppress outright this crucial foundation phase of my exposé. Though the following disclosures, like so many of the preceding ones, may shock countless numbers of good Moderns, it should be glaringly evident by now that it's about time for us to start seeing *The New Yorker* steadily and seeing it whole. It's much, much later than we think.

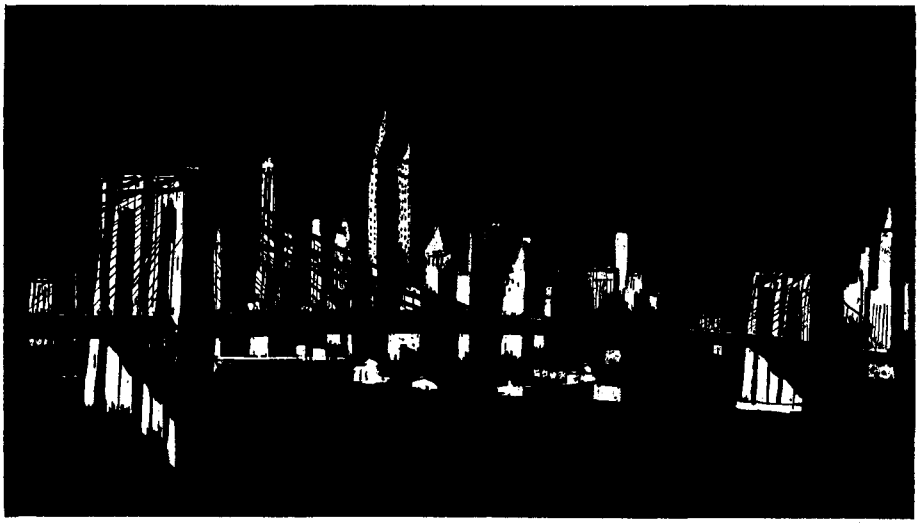
## *Forward Adventurously*

Fifteen or twenty years ago, had we been told that traditional religion would be staging a comeback in the very near future, we would have smiled tolerantly. And if we had been further told that belief in a personal God would soon seem the normal and natural, even the fashionable, credo to avow publicly, we would probably have hooted contemptuously.

But as of right now, we Moderns are fighting a losing battle against God and the Ten Commandments. True, most of our leading writers, artists, and professional philosophers are manfully holding the lines. And in our schools and colleges, few concessions have been made to outworn notions of right and wrong or to supposedly defunct religious superstitions. Fortunately for those of us who desire to go forward adventurously with the decades rather than lag obtusely behind with the centuries, Freud, Dewey, Russell, et al., still rule the educational roosts.

Many of the current attacks on Logical Positivism, Pragmatism, atheistic Existentialism, and Ethical Relativism are coming, I suspect, from a rather small body of tired, frightened Moderns who have been reading, not *The New Yorker,* but the *New Republic* and the *Nation;* and these apostate attacks probably indicate nothing more serious, as Professor Sidney Hook would be quick to point out if I didn't, than a temporary loss of Liberal nerve.

Even so, the fact remains that *The New Yorker* is the most dangerous single threat to the prestige and continuing dominance of Modern constructs and ideologies. And at this critical period in America's spiritual life, I feel that nothing could be more tonic and clarifying, nothing more likely to insure an early recovery of



Liberal nerve, than the public unmasking of this magazine's primitive Christian theism, which has, for the most part, gone so long, so perilously long, unnoticed.

At this juncture, many readers are doubtless bristling with a sort of desperate, last-ditch skepticism, probably muttering to themselves that any Christian evidences I cite from *The New Yorker* are pretty sure to be taken from the 1939-42 files of the magazine, years when the menace of Hitler was turning whole droves of us temporarily edgy, backsliding Moderns into Panzer-moralists and Reich-Christians. That being the case, I shall treat this phase of my study in strict chronological sequence. Furthermore, I shall try to keep my own comment to a bare minimum. After all, what is there for a good Modern to *say* about such throwback, not very intellectually respectable subjects as God, piety, and prayer?

Long before the outbreak of World War Two, we find hoary sentiments like these permeating the pages of *The New Yorker*:

". . . Our civilization is perfectly reflected in our advertisements, as in a clear pool of White Rock; the mark of perfect breeding is not to care, really, about what products you use. You just happen to collapse at night on a Sleepy-bye Mattress—or were pushed. The 'happen' ads are another expression of the prevailing philosophy of despair—the culture that says that nothing matters, not even the kind of razor one uses. Our prediction is that this era of despair and detachment will be followed by a religious revival, and that people, sick of Science's attempt to prove something from the world, will turn again to the Church, as being simpler, cleaner, and more comforting. . . ." (July 21, 1934)

*Professor Crane Brinton's review of Reinhold Niebuhr's* The Irony of American History *should bring home to us Moderns the urgency of this exposé of* The New Yorker. *". . . in this idealism," concluded Professor Brinton, "he [Niebuhr] discerns what he thinks is the really disastrous weakness of American liberalism with which, after all, he himself has been so long identified. The fascinating question which Dr. Niebuhr's lifework suggests is whether our 'liberals,' 'progressives,' 'non-Communist Left'—call them what you will, they are identifiable enough perhaps in this country by the term 'intellectuals'—can really adopt, not necessarily Dr. Niebuhr's Christian theism, which would for many of them*



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*be an impossible wrenching from the positivist strata two centuries have filled in around them, but even his pessimistic view of human nature, his concept of original sin. Can the children of Jefferson accept original sin—in themselves as well as in others?"*—N. Y. Herald Tribune Book Review, Apr. 6, 1952, p. 5.

*Babbitt wrote in 1908: "We reason that science must have created a new heaven because it has so plainly created a new earth . . . are we not spending seventy-five million dollars a year on automobiles, with a fair prospect of soon having successful airships? In view of these glorious achievements, why be disquieted by the increase in murders, in suicides, in insanity, in divorce, by all the multiplying symptoms of some serious and perhaps fatal one-sidedness in our civilization that is bringing down on us its appropriate nemesis?"*—Literature and the American College, pp. 63-64.

## *Inflaming Xmas Card*

In 1934, some fun-loving, completely emancipated Modern rubbed a *New Yorker* writer the wrong way by sending him an unconventional Christmas greeting. St. Augustine himself could scarcely have been inflamed to greater wrath: "One thing that could happen to the world, regardless of its economy, is that it could go to pot in what ministers call 'spiritual and moral ways.' Sunday sermons indicate some such dark climax, but we notice it never quite happens, probably because of some inherent responsibility in the human animal which not even a Presbyterian could explain. You don't have to be a holy man to detect, running through our life and times, a parlor brand of insincerity. Even so forthright and anxious an organ as this magazine has a sort of surface unregeneracy as a result of mirroring an unhinged decade. There is a resolute attempt to be gaily anarchical by people who are neither essentially gay nor genuinely insurgent. Their desperate iconoclasm finds its highest expression in the dirty Christmas card. Last year somebody sent us a dirty Christmas card and we haven't recovered from it yet. Apparently, to some people struggling toward the light, the dirty Christmas card is the final vow, the Thirty-third Degree in their emancipation from Bible fable. We simply ask that they leave us out of it. Anyone who is contemplating sending us a greeting should be advised that we like cards with holly berries, or with a reference to a child born in a stable."

*See More in his essay on James Joyce: ". . . obscenity becomes a kind of substitute for the ideals of religion, a despotic faith in the horror of utter disorder behind the illusion of decency and stability. . . . To me, I will confess, this spectacle of a great genius expending itself on the propagation of irresponsibility, while the fabric of society is shaken to its foundation, brings rather dismay and sadness. With Mr. Eliot I disagree reluctantly, since at bottom we are, I trust and believe, in accord; but there are those, the 'emancipated,' with whom the issue is of another sort."*—On Being Human (1936), pp. 92-93.

The next year we were told in "The Talk of the Town" that "these are the days of the great Voices. We hear priests, senators, and baseball results . . . It is interesting to speculate about the future of the Voices, whether people won't tire of them, perhaps, or yell themselves out. We half suspect that in the years ahead there will be a waning of the great Voices, a return to the little ones: a revival of the mystical life, an ear cocked to the inner voice, the still small voice, the voice of God, the voice of the turtle." (June 1, 1935.)

Again that year in "The Talk of the Town," we read: "Whenever we write of the church, or of holy things, we fear giving the false impression of scorn or sacrilege. The truth is we yearn toward the church, so much so that we sometimes steal in and sing the hymns loud in a back pew. Our feeling for those who can deal with the saints is one of envy; for without religion man's estate is barren. The people who are luckiest are those to whom it comes easily, as to those who add a brick to St. Anne's and in return are healed of a wart. The church is really our greatest problem. We are in the same grave predicament with millions who fear God but won't shake hands with a vestryman." (Sept. 14, 1935.)

*See More on Babbitt: ". . . he took pains in his writing to avoid irritating the sensibility of Christian readers . . . . he recognized in what he would call the psychological effects of dogmatic faith a moral and spiritual discipline to be acclaimed and fostered, whatever its source might be. He saw, and admitted wholeheartedly, that belief in the Grace of God had in times past operated to awaken the soul 'from the sloth and lethargy of the senses,' and to produce a 'constant exercise of the active will.' . . . the Church as an institution he held personally in deep distaste, however he may have seemed to make an exception of the disciplinary authority of Romanism."*

—On Being Human (1936), pp. 36-37.

Sorely disturbed by the complexities and contradictions of the world of 1938, the magazine editorialized in this anything but enlightened and Modern vein: ". . . it is hard for anyone to say, fairly, whether prayer itself will alleviate an international situation or aggravate it. Our own prayers these days are misty, impartial, visionary. We simply pray the Lord our soul to keep." (April 2, 1938.)

## *Freudian Year*

Nor did the publication of a book by a quite Liberal, scientific-minded minister of the gospel prove to be of much help to the *New Yorker* people in getting through a dreary, Freudian, non-Euclidian twelve months:

"For the past three and a half years, the Reverend John Sutherland Bonnell of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church has quietly been applying psychiatry to his parishioners, and now at last has written a book of case histories, which was published last week. . . . For obvious reasons, he omitted all names, but we have an idea that there is still going to be a little tension in his church for the next few Sundays. We can't quite imagine a lady keeping her mind on the sermon while earnestly trying to figure out if that woman across the aisle could conceivably be the Mrs. A. who had that persistent impulse to rearrange her husband with an axe. We can picture no general spirit of calm devotion with the whole congregation knowing that the air above them is black with outrageous compulsions, like gnats over a stagnant pool." (December 3, 1938.)

*Thus Babbitt: "The psychoanalytical divine, who is, I am told, a fairly frequent type in England, is about the worst* mélange des genres *that has appeared even in the present age of confusion."*—Spanish Character, p. 236.

And in the issue of December 24, 1938, two decidedly old-fashioned religious poems appeared in the magazine, which at least a hundred thousand Moderns read. But after all, they presumably thought to themselves,



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it's Christmas, and no great harm done by entering for a week or so into the make-believe spirit of the season. The first one was by E. B. White, and went like this:

> Though Rhyme, and his brother, Reason,
> Have Lately quit the earth,
> We still shall mark the season
> Of one child's holy birth; . . .

The second, by Mary Ballard Duryee, went more or less in the same way:

> Now the bitter thorn has not
> Bloomed upon the bough
> That will make a twisted crown
> For His holy brow; . . .

1939 was, among other things, the year that the strange sounds came from the sky over Brooklyn, and, according to *The New Yorker*, "Supreme Court judges, housewives, scientists, and cops hurried out into the street to read the portents. There were many rumors. It was an earthquake (Long Island slipping back under the sea); it was the Brooklyn Edison Company (conceivably engineering a merger); it was the mutter of the aurora borealis, or a tidal wave, or, according to a radio man, just 'an oblate ellipsoidal sound shell, formed by colder temperature in the higher atmosphere.' None of these explanations stood up under investigation and the mystery, as we write, remains in pure form, with one man's guess as good as the next. We approve of this, having an old-fashioned taste for miracles and a passion for *not* having everything explained in a reasonable and orderly manner. The sound you heard that night, ladies and gentlemen, may have been the rumble of juggernaut or the drums of jeopardy. Or it may just have been God clearing His throat." (Jan. 21, 1939.)

## *"Sign from Heaven"*

The following year, it was a meteor, or something, that served to bring out even more nakedly the magazine's inveterate theism:

"A piece of hot metal, about the size of a bean, fell from the sky and hit a Nebraska farmer sharply in the foot. Picking it up, he mailed it off to the American Meteorite Laboratory at Denver to find out if it was a meteor, a spent bullet, or perhaps just a fragment from some mysterious and distant explosion. In this tiny episode, we see somehow a symptom of what is wrong with the times. A simple man, ploughing his field, gets a clear sign from heaven. His grandfather would have accepted the miracle at its face value, as a divine warning or prophecy. He would have told his neighbors at meeting and the religious life of the countryside would have been richer for his experience. This man, however, ships the supernatural pellet to a laboratory for analysis. Skepticism, it seems to us, has reached its last frontier when every message from on high is promptly submitted to the scientists. There can be no more wonders when the first instinct of every citizen, confronted with the inscrutable, is to consult a research chemist or a psychoanalyst. Occasionally, at times like these, we understand

dimly what the clergy is up against. We don't envy them." (December 7, 1940.)

More and Babbitt feared that not only individuals, like the Nebraska farmer, were coming more and more to view all problems (and baffle-ments) as essentially secular ones, but that the churches themselves were tending to become increasingly concerned with worldly matters—no longer primarily houses of worship, but convenient meeting places, instead, where one is assured of finding a jolly, service-club sort of good fellowship, or an intense but open-minded league-of-women-voters kind of interest in social questions and political issues. And during 1941, *The New Yorker* gave vent to the same backward, medieval fears. "A young couple, married or otherwise," said an ad in the *Times*, "can find friendly, social, homelike atmosphere, entertainment, theatricals, outings, gymnasium, roller skating by joining active mid-town church club; no dues. Y 2620." Alarmed at the prospect of our religious institutions being transformed into mere community centers for the oldsters and refined, inexpensive hangouts for the pool-sharks and coke-hounds of the teen-age set, the magazine commented glumly: "The church certainly gets more liberal every year." (February 15.)

## *Babbitt Would Have Approved*

In *The Critique of Humanism* (1930), Kenneth Burke observed that "the real danger which seems to me to lurk at this time in the focusing of our interests upon such indirect or 'cultural' cures as religion or Humanism" is that "the issues to be faced are confused by the introduction of alien terms." Mr. Burke went on to say that "though it is probably true that ninety people out of a hundred would still pray in an earthquake, this tendency to bargain with the Father is not much on which to reerect an all-pervading structure of faith."[1]

Whose side *The New Yorker* has been on these many years is plainly brought out in the following passage from "The Talk of the Town" for August 8, 1942:

"'I prayed a lot and jived my shoulders a little,' said a Negro woman in Chattanooga the other day, explaining how she kept from freezing when she was locked in a cold-storage compartment overnight. Her explanations strikes us as a wonderful formula, something that ought to take its place beside 'Ninety-seven per cent perspiration and three per cent inspiration.' . . . If there is any single recipe for riding safely through these desperate times, any charm against unpredictable catastrophe, it is probably very close to that Negro woman's —just the proper blend of prayer and jive, the prayer predominating but the jive always present, the shoulders always poised for the sudden, galvanic twitch."

I haven't the slightest doubt that Irving Babbitt would have treasured

[1] "I hope, said Dr. Harold C. Urey a number of years ago, "the hydrogen bomb doesn't work, but there's no way of controlling nature. Sometimes it's too co-operative. Frankly I'm scared to death. Sometimes I feel prayer is the only solution and I wish I had a direct line to the Almighty to ask Him for guidance."—The Detroit *Free Press*, Mar. 3, 1950. Dr. Urey may, of course, have been misquoted.



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this little episode as an exemplification of Humanism at its truest and best. What's more, I suspect he would have deemed the magazine's formulation of it wonderful indeed.

And while still on the "alien," "indirect" subject of prayer, it is interesting as well as pertinent to recall that in 1944 *The New Yorker* humanistically chided the Democrats, in convention at Chicago, for limiting "their daily prayers to two minutes, whereas the Republican invocations ran to fifteen minutes or more. . . . The ratio of oratory to orisons at the Democratic convention indicates the growth during the past twelve years of a certain overconfidence, and it might be wise for the Democrats to glance back to 1932, when it was they who prayed long and ardently. . . . Now the roles are reversed. It is the moment, perhaps, for the Democrats to take stock, cultivate a less blasé attitude, and give the Deity a little more of their time." (July 29.)

At year's end, 1945, the magazine editorialized in this primitive Christian fashion:

"There hasn't been a Christmas like this one since the first Christmas—the fear, the suffering, the awe, the strange new light that nobody understands yet. All the traditional characteristics of Christmas are this year in reverse; instead of the warm grate and the happy child, in most parts of the world the cold room and the starveling."

After reading the foregoing passages, there is really nothing much left for us Moderns to say. We can only hang our heads in shame at having been taken in so utterly for so long. We can, however, *do* something. We can (and most certainly should) cease—now, at once, immediately—making our long-standing fondness for this flip, hedonistic magazine a proud boast of our Modernity.

But, pathetically enough, there is one thing I'm afraid we Moderns will never be able to do. And that is, appreciate, in the way and to the degree it so richly deserves, the altogether breathtaking, positively Olympian irony of the banning of *The New Yorker* in the year 1937 from the newsstands of Edinburgh on moral grounds.

(*Mr. Clark's series on* The New Yorker *will be concluded next week.*)

# ON THE LEFT . . . C. B. R.

**Flirtation.** Not since the days of Mary Price's penetration of Walter Lippmann's files, have the Communists shown such ardent interest in Mr. Lippmann. (Miss Price will be remembered as one of Elizabeth Bentley's co-conspirators in the Communist Party.) In fact, their frenzied wooing has aroused more than passing comment on newspaper row. A few months ago, *Pravda* and *Izvestia* signalled their American compatriots by reprinting, without comment, Lippmann's column criticizing President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles. Moscow's faithful echo, the *Daily Worker*, on August 23 quoted with acclaim Lippmann's convenient theory that the "military stalemate" demonstrated at Geneva "will compel us to rethink a number of our ideas." First to be rethought, he felt, was "the assumption that the revolutionary movements all over the globe originate in Moscow." Again on August 11 the Communist mouthpiece cited, as proof of Dulles' failure at Geneva, Lippmann's statement that Dulles and everyone else knew that the Soviet Union would never accept proposals to "surrender unconditionally." Again on November 20 a Red feature writer referred to Lippmann's column, "The Post Geneva World," as "the most important and most cogent thing he has ever written." Quoting generously from Lippmann's article, this feature writer says that "Lippmann punctures all the pretentious propaganda that the big business press cabled in the guise of news." Incidentally, Lippmann was an honor guest at the musicale and supper party given for the Soviet violinist Oistrakh at the Soviet Embassy on December 16.

**Scrapping Security.** A Communist demand for the abolition of the security program against subversive influences in the government would obviously be laughed out of court. Hence it is sound Communist strategy to have the Liberals do their dirty work. The Communist press gives lavish praise to the recent conclusion of Henry Steele Commager of Columbia University that "The defects of the security program are not merely mechanical. The program is not really susceptible to improvement. . . . The vices of the program are deep, pervasive and irremediable." Commager's reasoning encourages Herbert Aptheker, a Communist scribbler, to demand the smashing of the "pending Smith Act and sedition act indictments."

**Boring into the ADA.** Tilford E. Dudley bobs up in the news as the secretary of the Washington chapter of the ADA. Formerly an examiner of the National Labor Relations Board, he was identified with the following Communist front organizations: Washington Committee for Democratic Action, the Washington Book Shop, the Washington Committee for Aid to China. He was formerly the Assistant Director of the CIO-Political Action Committee, within which the House Committee on Un-American Activities has called attention to "Communist predominance."

**A Mark upon Cain.** The gyrations of Harry "Pinwheel" Cain have become somewhat dizzying. In 1949 he opposed ex-Gov. Mons C. Wallgren for confirmation by the Senate as a member of the National Security Resources Board, charging that the Governor had been "soft on Communism." Since then he has suffered a change of heart and apologized to Wallgren. At that time he denounced the Washington Pension Union as a "notorious Communist-front organization." However, in the November issue of *Coronet* magazine, he referred to the organization as "working for free milk and pensions." While the Justice Department has demanded that Cain be disqualified from hearing the case of the Washington Pension Union before the Subversive Activities Control Board because of his bias in favor of the Union, the Communist press is strenuously defending Cain's right to conduct the hearings. They are applauding Cain's denunciation of the Attorney General's list. These demonstrations of instability are seriously compromising Harry Cain's position on the Subversive Activities Control Board.



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# NATIONAL TRENDS

L. BRENT BOZELL

**Richard Nixon's chances** are now almost entirely in the laps of the Kingmakers. Until recently Nixon hoped to strengthen his claim to Successorship by a number of primary victories in advance of the Palace Guard's selection of its candidate. But such hopes have been spiked by "Operation Phantom"—the Palace Guard's current plan to delay announcement of President Eisenhower's withdrawal from the race, and to run him in the primaries as a stalking horse for his successor.

The Vice President's personal prospects in the primaries were never overly good anyway. Nixon has always felt, and probably correctly so, that he would show well on a national basis; but he has, at the same time, known that ten states in his pocket would profit him nothing if he were to lose California. Nor could he afford to avoid a test of strength in his home state. And with Senator Knowland to beat there, the whole venture involved very considerable risks. Nixon's hopes rested on winning a number of primary victories before the late California test of June 5. The theory was that he could beat Senator Knowland if he were to ride into California on something like a national groundswell.

As things stand now, Knowland would unquestionably win a California contest with Nixon. Knowland is the stronger, both in popularity and organization. Nixon's organization (the California Republican Assembly) is long on publicity, but short on solid political strength. Knowland and Governor Knight (who prefers Knowland to Nixon, and has no serious Presidential ambitions of his own) dominate the State GOP Central Committee. In California politics, this means decisive influence with party workers at high and low levels. Nixon tried to get control of the Central Committee a year ago, but was soundly trounced by the Knowland-Knight alliance.

The possibilities of achieving a decisive pre-California build-up for Nixon are now remote. As long as the President is, even just theoretically, a candidate, the Vice President cannot enter the earlier primaries. Which puts Nixon at the mercy of the GOP Liberals; and the best he can do is hope for the nod later on.

What Nixon would like, of course, is White House permission to enter primary contests (including California's) as a candidate pledged to "support Eisenhower if he is able to run." In that fashion he would carry everything before him—which is the reason he will be politely advised of the blessings of self-restraint: even those Presidential aids who are Nixon's enemies (and particularly they) can claim they have his interests in mind if they counsel complete abstinence for the time being. This does not mean that all the President's advisors have decided against Nixon. They are, in truth, delaying the decision for a number of reasons, of which not the least important is to make sure that the King, whoever he may be, will know who "made" him.

**Senator Kefauver's candidacy** is not as pointless as everyone seems to think. True, the country is not likely to be swept off its feet by his Mortimer Snerdisms on the problems of the day; but Kefauver's campaign legs are strong, he is friendly and he still has a name of sorts—all of which could add up to enough delegates with whom to purchase the Vice-Presidential nomination. Kefauver insists, once again, that he is not interested in the second place on the ticket. But this time he doesn't mean it.

Kefauver knows well enough that four more years as a lacklustre Senator would erode his stature as a national figure. He has done nothing noteworthy except run for President since his TV show disbanded in 1951; and since no one wants any more of that, the future looks barren. As Vice President, Kefauver could keep himself in the public eye; and for that he will gladly complete the ticket of any candidate who needs his votes.

**Signs of the Geneva times:** Owen Lattimore's boisterous "ordeal" seems to be nearly over, and the country is once again listening to suggestions by Dr. Lattimore on how to run its Asian policy. His most recent forum was a widely reported meeting of the Emergency Committee for Civil Liberties in New York.

The press welcomed Lattimore back to the Great Debate as a "controversial Far Eastern affairs specialist" (to quote the AP story) which—in spite of Elmer Davis' whimsical pronouncement that to be called "controversial" is "fatal"—is assuredly a revealing token of how far Lattimore and his countrymen have travelled in the three years since the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee authoritatively described Lattimore as "a conscious, articulate instrument of the Soviet conspiracy."

Lattimore's new unveiling was done under noteworthy auspices. The Emergency Committee for Civil Liberties has, on the one hand, a respectable back-scratching relationship with the Fund for the Republic—the you-finance - my - pamphlet - and - I'll - distribute-your-book kind of thing has been going on for months. On the other hand, the head of the ECCL is Clark Foreman, a former President of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare (which, according to the Internal Security Subcommittee, was "conceived, financed and set up by the Communist Party in 1938 as a mass organization to promote Communism throughout the Southern States") whose record of Communist-front affiliations is legendary. Back in 1951, when Foreman was organizing the group before which Lattimore spoke, he wrote a letter offering an assistant's job to a former CIO-PAC official, who has written under a by-line for the *Daily Worker*. Mr. Foreman's letter included the paragraph which follows:

"The new group in case you haven't heard of it is to be limited to a couple of hundred non-CPs with an executive committee of about nine and a director. The idea is to try to broaden the interest in civil liberties a little so that it won't be identified completely with the far left and yet will move a little more militantly than the A.C.L.U. (American Civil Liberties Union) is."



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# Foreign Trends . . . w. s.

## *The Malaise Goes On*

The general consensus in France: the January election will bring no change and the political misery (*la malaise*) will go on.

Which means, among other things, that Pierre Mendès-France has lost his bold bet, at least temporarily. For Mendès-France expected to return to power in early 1956—this time to stay; and the strategy of this comeback was, from the beginning, a strange mixture of traditional French politicking and an ominous new invocation of "mass spontaneity." But, contrary to Mendès-France's expectations, the traditional politician's game proved a cinch, while the appeal to revolutionary French restlessness proved a flop.

The savage duel between Mendès-France and his former disciple, Prime Minister Faure, was fought entirely according to the book of French politics: Faure cheated Mendès-France out of his prospects of spending at least six months on a full-fledged election campaign, whereupon Mendès-France got him expelled from the Radical Socialist party (which, however, is by no means conquered by "Mendèsism"). But once these histrionics were over, the country simply yawned. France, in short, is completely in tune with the general Western mood of rather happy-go-lucky apathy. And Mendès-France, who saw himself swept back into office by a storm of French unrest over the do-nothing policy of Faure, will have another dream coming. For the French people, enjoying the nearest thing to prosperity France has seen in twenty years, are not in the mood to call in a government of "doers."

Which does not mean that Mendès-France and his disturbing *équipe* of amateur revolutionists are through. The slightest economic earthquake might produce that storm of "spontaneity" on which Mendès-France keeps banking. But for the time being France seems to be satisfied with a government which passively lets her empire crumble, passively leaves most everybody alone (within, of course, the choking "normal" system of French statism), and passively waits for the unknown.

In this French mood, the only power incorruptible by prosperity and unimpressed by normalcy remains the Communist Party. As of this writing (ten days before the election), the general consensus in France gives the Communists excellent chances to return to the parliament with an even larger block of deputies; in which case the French Communist Party will have it very much in its hands to time the fall of the next French government precisely according to Moscow's diplomatic needs. And if Mendès-France continues his dangerous maneuvering, he may by then well be the man with whom Moscow would love to "coexist."

## *Hide-and-Seek Fabianism*

Earl Attlee's successor, Mr. Hugh Gaitskell, will, it seems, preside over this *and* the next generation of British socialism. Sufficiently young to outlive any other contender for Labor leadership, Mr. Gaitskell enjoys the additional advantage of being exactly the type of leader British socialism requires for a long time to come—namely, the "non-socialist" type.

Mr. Gaitskell, in fact, is the Labor Party's response to the Conservative Party's challenge, the challenge being the Conservative Party's mimicry in a generally socialist environment. The Conservatives act as if there were simply no two points of view concerning the Welfare State; and while principled people may object to this kind of cleverness, it indubitably creates headaches in Labor's headquarters. For it puts Labor before a dilemma—either to allow the Conservatives to cash in on Welfarism, or to stress (for clear identification) its own utopianism even more. Aneurin Bevan advocates the latter; but he has been thoroughly trounced by the Gaitskell forces which, quite correctly, insist on a different reading of the portents: Britain, they claim, is happy with just so much, and no more, socialism; and, if anyone wants to fool Britain into more socialism, he must look about as Conservative as the Conservatives sound socialist.

Mr. Gaitskell, in short, is Labor's great contribution to this age of mimicry. He is of course a Socialist, but he looks (and sometimes speaks) like the efficient and busy executive who might just as well perform on the Conservative side. British politics, which for generations was proud of its "ideological" character, is increasingly turning into the Tweedledee-Tweedledum kind of Two Party System which the British for so long ridiculed as "Americanism." In Britain, the two big parties clearly attempt to look like each other, rather than emphasize their "ideological" differences. And the British expect Mr. Gaitskell to be a real wizard in the hide-and-seek type of jockeying which (or so the Fabians fervently hope) will return British socialism even officially to power.

## *Those Empty Stomachs*

It is the conditioned reflex of Liberal America to identify the noise of Asiatic Communism as the rumbling of empty stomachs; and to recommend the transfer of American wealth to Asia as the only antidote against Asiatic Communism. But one of the many troubles with this allegedly realistic position is that it completely discards reality.

For instance, the UN's Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East reports that the six leading nations of Asia raised their output of industrial goods by eleven per cent in 1954. Now this, as any economist would testify, is an almost insanely fast rate of growth. In fact, honest concern with the area's welfare should make the U. S. advise, if anything, a slowdown of this fantastic industrialization. And yet, in spite of this tropical growth of productivity, Asiatic Communism is expanding even faster. Nor is this alleged paradox confined to the Mysterious East. In Italy, for instance, at the heart of Western civilization, the Communist Party has grown most dangerously (thirty per cent over and above its strength in 1948) in the South—precisely the area where the government has concentrated virtually all Italian investments "to fight Communism by economic development."



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# *Behind the French Elections*

**A slip by Mendes-France brought about the current general election that can cure the paralysis of all modern French governments only if a majority large enough to amend the Constitution is returned**

JULES MONNEROT

The African problem was principally responsible for the move to advance the date of the French parliamentary elections. The government—with the endorsement of the more intelligent segments of French political opinion—wanted early elections in order to prevent issues as grave as those involved in North Africa from being decided by a Chamber whose members were exclusively concerned with the imminent problem of getting reelected. Impending national elections resulted in legislative determination to sidestep any and all immediately unpopular measures—even measures vitally necessary to the national interest. The first effect of M. Faure's proposal was, for obvious psychological reasons, an intensification of this concern. On what kind of ballot would the new Chamber be chosen? Each party and group, of course, wanted an electoral system which would predictably assure the election of a maximum number of its own members. And dissolution of the Assembly before a new electoral law was voted would mean holding the next election under the same law as the last.

The 1951 election law, known as the law of alliances, is somewhat peculiar. It provides for a one-count-majority type of ballot which, with slight differences in detail, was first tried in Italy. In each Department the different parties may, if they choose, combine their lists of candidates, and the single list or pool of lists which receives more than half the votes cast, gets all the seats.

This system was introduced in 1951 by a coalition of Christian Socialists (the MRP), Moderates (Independents), and Socialists, to weaken the Gaullist Rassemblement, whose program posed a threat to the parliamentary dictatorship, which, until the recent dissolution, was the *de facto* government of the Fourth Republic. The central idea of the pooling system was that all parties in favor of the status quo would get together and connive against the enemy—the Gaullists and the Communists, with whom no other party would be likely to form a pool. The law served its purpose to perfection: it cost the Gaullists several dozens of seats, reduced the number of Communist deputies from 177 to 103 (although the CP polled 26.5 per cent of the votes, a decrease of only two percentage points from 1946), and enabled the Socialists to gain seats even while losing votes. In a word, the system served admirably to guarantee the political survival of those who created it.

The victorious electoral coalition was unable, however, to transform itself into a successful parliamentary coalition. And the 1951 Chamber, in consequence, never gave France a stable parliamentary majority of the kind that ensures continuity of government. *Political survival had been purchased at the cost of political effectiveness.*

## *The All-Powerful Assembly*

The parliamentary dictatorship set up by the 1946 Constitution gave free rein to a long-standing historical tendency of the French Left. The Assembly is the exclusive depository of the sovereignty of the French people; there exists no political power except as it resides *in* the Assembly or is delegated *by* the Assembly. All power today is lodged in the Chamber of Deputies, and the government is simply a removable—and frequently removed—committee of the Chamber. The three other French assemblies, the Council of the Republic, the Assembly of the French Union, and the National Economic Council, are merely consultative. The President of the Republic, reduced to a purely decorative role, is a constitutional cog, without power of his own. Thus neither a second chamber nor a politically effective local self-government or referendum arrangement or counter-weight of any kind is available to restrain the Assembly, unless it be the bureaucracy, which has weight and competence. Only one article of the 1946 Constitution (Article 51 under Title Six) can, if invoked, open a breach in the parliamentary dictatorship. It is this article that M. Faure called into play on the first of December, when he dissolved the Assembly.

In ordinary times, then, the destiny of the French people is in the hands of two political bodies: the Assembly (Chamber of Deputies), and the bureaucracy. There is in France a high degree of bureaucratic centralization and efficiency. Forged by the French monarchy in the course of its struggle over the centuries, the bureaucracy has emerged with increased strength from each of France's revolutions. Today it is headed not by a king or an emperor, but by an assembly which the 1946 Constitution made to all intents and purposes omnipotent, but which has been paralyzed by the multiplicity and mutual hostility of France's political parties.

A further cause of paralysis since 1951 has been the dissension and disintegration within these parties—except, of course, the Communist Party. The bureaucracy, which generally speaking enjoys complete job security, is deeply infiltrated by Communists. No steps have been taken to get rid of the large numbers of Communists who entered the bureaucracy in 1944-6, and later. Since the Chamber of Deputies is, on the level of effectiveness, a defective machine, the



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most powerful organizations in France today are the bureaucracy and the Communist Party. The Party understands this very well; it has, accordingly, set itself the task of taking over the bureaucracy.

## *No Challenge to Communists*

There is a power vacuum in French politics. Communism does not face a single political movement capable of challenging it either on the level of dynamism or on that of organization. The Gaullist party, organized in 1947 and triumphantly victorious in the municipal elections of that year, had by 1951, when it lost 120 seats to the Third Force, petered out into powerlessness. This party, whose organization was neither large enough nor firm enough to save it, saw itself transformed, in the give and take of parliamentary life, into a formless mass, some of whose members have attached themselves to the Moderates, others to M. Mendès-France. In between the two there is a middle group, conspicuous for its lack of decision, and politically insignificant.

The elections of January 2 will probably severely set back the Gaullist group, which the General himself has expressly disowned, and whose rank and file supporters will not soon forgive it for failing to fulfill the hopes they once pinned on it. The Gaullist Rassemblement promised the French people nothing less than to rid them of Communism, and the promise is still very far from being redeemed. The Poujade movement, founded on a merchants' rebellion against the fiscal policy, simply cannot be magnified into a national political force, hard though certain Leftist elements have tried so to classify it. In 1936, it was the slogan "Down with Fascism" that made possible the popular front. Today an attempt to use the same slogan as a pretext for another popular front would be farcical. There simply isn't *any* internal enemy on the "Right" that can be used as a catalyst of unity. France's only internal enemy is the Communists—and its own vices. And the tragedy is that, as matters now stand, if the regime were to crash, Communism would be its sole residuary legatee.

The last days of the Assembly were dominated by a clash between M. Mendès-France and M. Edgar Faure. Both are Radicals, and since the dissolution M. Mendès-France has prevailed on the Radical Party to expel M. Faure. He was able to do this, be it noted, only by availing himself of Neo-Jacobin methods which he would be the first to brand "Fascist" if somebody else were to use them. His purpose was to capture the formal party machinery. M. Faure had been M. Mendès-France's Minister of Finance, succeeding him as Premier; and as Premier, Faure has merely continued the concessionist policy M. Mendès-France had instituted in North Africa, indeed has seemed to go even farther in Morocco than the Mendès-France policy would have required him to.

M. Mendès-France, following a long period of isolation in the ranks of the Radical Party, put himself during the last legislature at the head of a group of political gamblers who are seeking to use the old Radical Party as an instrument for catapulting themselves into power. They are attempting to restore to life the party's left wing of the thirties, the party of the so-called Young Turks, with its economic nostrums, its Jacobin consecration, its appeal to youth, to dynamism, to progress, to modernization.

This faction launched a newspaper, *l'Express,* exclusively devoted to giving noisy publicity to Mendès-France. Its diction is ostentatiously rough and cocky. It seeks to bring together, from pretty much all the parties, the nation's most dynamic and power-hungry young politicians. Mendès, who at the time he was conducting the nation's affairs used strong language only when capitulating (on EDC, Indochina, Tunisia), now does so with fervor in his capacity as leader of a rebellion of greedy young politicians against the party system established after the Liberation. And as leader of the never-ceasing "drive to the Left" in French politics.

Apart from an occasional attempt to sound highly technical, Mendès' speech, again by deliberate choice, is that of the "Man of the Left," messianic in style, and belonging, in the political zoo, somewhere between Nehru and Roosevelt. He is, however, working at cross-purposes with himself. For Communism is no longer weak enough merely to sustain him, as it did Leon Blum in 1935. It must either defeat or engulf him, for nobody in present-day France can be strong enough to maintain a balance between Communists and anti-Communists. Communism's roots are now so deep that *qui ne fait aucun effort pour l'extirper, la favorise*—he who makes no attempt to kill it, fosters its growth. *The Left can either ally itself with Communism, and become Communism's creature, or it can leave Communism outside, in which case it cannot win.* This is the reason for the probable political impotence of Mendès-France.

Until the dissolution, Faure appeared to be a complete political opportunist, a gambler playing the cards in his hand, such as they were, the best he knew how, but (like Aristide Briand, for example) the possessor of a rare talent for floating and swimming in French parliamentary waters. Unlike Mendès, he seems to have no messianic leanings whatever.

One of the most striking reasons for the Mendès gang's animosity toward Faure is that Faure took over Mendès' own African policy. If Mendès fights that policy, he fights himself. Mendès' newspaper, therefore, has its hands tied: it can launch against Faure only a campaign of personal disparagement as unconvincing as it is systematic.

## *A Dangerous Device*

Dissolution of the Chamber, as is well known, is a political device that the founding fathers of the Third Republic regarded as reactionary and anti-republican (because of the precedents of Polignac in 1830 and MacMahon in 1877). Dissolution contravenes the unwritten law of the dictatorship of the Assembly. And, last but not least, it menaces the job security of the deputies since the assurance that there would be no dissolution, added to indefinite eligibility for reelection, made the French deputies—until last month—a sort of privileged body, and their function a profession which, if skilfully exercised, could last a lifetime.

M. Edgar Faure, in daring to apply paragraph 51 of the Constitution, suddenly regained (as the whole provincial press gives evidence) a credit which his perpetual political tightrope walking had lost him. Faure is curing the French of the "MacMahon complex." However open the dissolution may be to objections on other grounds



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(it leaves untouched an electoral law that produces a Chamber without a stable majority), it is a first step toward normalization of the French political system. And everyone, including the phalanx of former premiers, believes that the system as it now stands is bad.

We must keep in mind the chain of events that led up to the dissolution. The Faure government had twice got the Assembly to approve a bill providing for an early election. Both in the Chamber and in the somewhat more detached Council of the Republic there promptly emerged a controversy as to how the votes in such an election were to be cast. The Moderates, led by Pinay and Duchet, and the Christian Socialists (MRP) favored the alliance system. The Socialists, the chief beneficiaries of the system in 1951 (they lost votes and gained seats), threw their weight behind a run-off arrangement based on single member constituencies instead of departmental lists. Mendès-France and his cohorts went along with the Socialists. These, however, were what one might call the "official" positions, a point worth making because many a deputy had, besides his official (i.e. public) position, another that was a closely guarded secret.

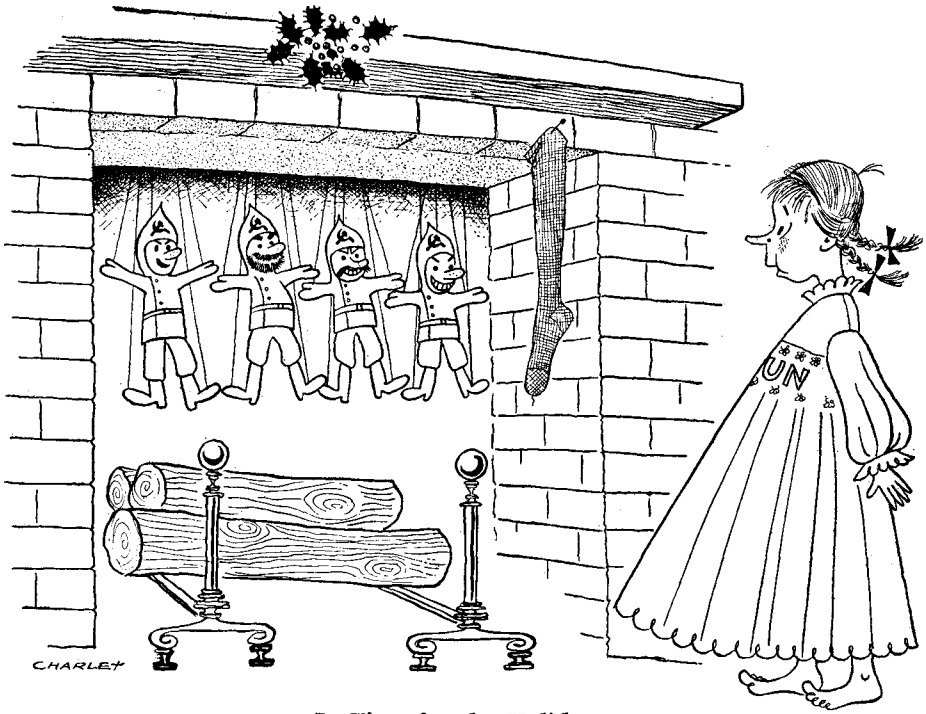
The early election has been a real setback to current plans for a popular front. People know too much about the Communists, these days, to permit a political movement or group or party that forms an alliance with them to plead, later, that it did so out of ignorance, innocence, or naïveté. The Geneva myth about the "easing of tensions" has, to be sure, been fully exploited in France, but despite that fact the situation, as a parliamentarian would put it, is not "ripe" for any alliance between the non-Communist Left and the Communists.

This was clearly shown in the initial positions adopted by the Socialists and the other non-Communist Left elements. M. Mendès-France himself was not prepared to handle the difficulty. Those who have objected to changing the date of the elections, M. Mendès-France above all, have concentrated their fire on the electoral arrangements—that is, the system of alliances. What should have been done first, they insisted, was to work out a satisfactory electoral law. But they were unable to agree, even among themselves, as to the shape a new electoral law ought to take. The Assembly rejected a system of single member constituencies, and then called it up for reconsideration. A plan based on large-scale gerrymandering picked up support in some quarters. New demand after new demand that the system must meet came to light. And the moment came when anyone with eyes in his head could see—with increasing clarity as the days slipped by—that an indefinitely prolonged debate on the electoral law was primarily a method for *preventing* an early election.

By November 20 the parliamentary situation seemed to indicate that no decision would be reached before—at the earliest—spring of the new year. The plan for advancing the date of the election, in other words, had bogged down completely, with those responsible for its bogging down proclaiming from the house-tops their eagerness to present themselves before their constituents at the earliest moment possible. All they wanted, they kept on saying, was a fair electoral law. We must add that the non-Communist deputies who hoped for Communist support wanted to do so under, so to speak, the shadow of darkness, and thus preferred the obscurity of the single member system to the broad daylight of the existing plan, which makes public the electoral alliances. M. Mendès-France's *l'Express* went all out, accordingly, for the single member system, as did the Socialists, who thought they could derive from it, in 1956, the unearned electoral income that the present law gave them in 1951.

## *How Faure Was Overthrown*

Edgar Faure was about to be overthrown on November 29, when he was saved by a turn of events that unavoidably brings to mind the great tradition of Parisian vaudeville, of the Labiches and Courtelines. The Constitution does indeed provide for dissolution of the Chamber, but in such fashion as to render it most improbable. The clauses in question, which M. Paul Reynaud has compared to a wooden sword, say in effect that if during a period of 18 months, beginning with the 19th month of a Chamber's life, the government finds itself in a minority twice, whether by a vote of non-confidence or by a vote of censure *supported by a constitutional majority*, the government can with the advice of the President of the Assembly decide to dissolve itself. (Formally, the dissolution is by Presidential decree pursuant to the government's decision.) A "constitutional majority" means a majority of the full membership, not merely of the members present. In other words: a premier




**In Time for the Holidays**



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can, under the Constitution, suddenly become, for the moment, so powerful that no man's hand can stay or hinder him, provided the vote against him is big enough! The provision may seem weird, but it is French constitutional law.

In order to prevent a dissolution, then, the Chamber that wishes to overthrow a government has only to see to it that the number of votes cast against that ministry shall not be so large as to let the deposed premier announce his intention to go to the country. The Chamber's artillerymen, in other words, merely have to be careful not to overshoot their target. Faure, on Sunday, November 27, sure to be beaten on Tuesday the 29th by a majority of the members present, and fully decided to resign, was putting himself forward as a candidate for leadership of a future electoral and parliamentary coalition, and proposing that the coalition's program include a constitutional change looking to automatic dissolution in any ministerial crisis that might occur within two years of an election. On Tuesday he was duly beaten, but his adversaries made the unheard-of mistake of rallying *too many* votes against him—four too many, to be precise—and so brought into play, to Faure's complete astonishment we may be sure, the now famous Article 51. He suddenly found himself in a position to carry out on the instant his proposal for early elections. The Chamber, by using a little too much gunpowder to blow up M. Faure's government, dissolved itself. We can write the word "Felix" after M. Faure's name as accurately as we can write it after Sulla's. And M. Mendès-France's current ostentatious barrage against him is the more amusing because Faure is in his present advantageous position as a result not of dark intrigue on his part, but because his opponents outsmarted themselves. This is why Paris and the provinces alike, though fully aware of the gravity of France's present situation, are shaken with subdued laughter as the Leftist newspapers talk solemnly about "treason to the spirit of the Constitution" and "the attack on he Republic."

If the groups and parties that call themselves Leftist (the Socialists, Mendèsistes, etc.) were to agree to combined electoral lists with the Communists, the resulting popular front would probably win. But such an agreement, calling as it does for a psychological preparation that would take time, was made almost impossible. Nor is the lack of time the only—or even the greatest—barrier. The top party committees are not in a position to commit themselves *publicly* to an alliance with the Communists. The political bureau of the Communist Party is almost certainly wasting time, then, when it calls upon the Left elements, the Socialists in particular, for a coalition (*Humanité* of December 1). The Political Bureau puts the case as follows: "The Communist and Socialist positions are very close together on the essential issues: the negotiation in North Africa ['anti-colonialism,' of course, would be the mortar with which the popular front would be stuck together]; disarmament; easing of international tension; higher wages, better working conditions, social security, support for working peasants, anti-clericalism [demagogy, in short, on all points, and outdoing all opponents on proposals to raid the Treasury]."

On December 2, M. Thorez, writing in *Humanité*, demanded that "the electoral alliance system be used as a weapon against Reaction. . . . The Socialists and Communists have, between them, a majority of the votes in 20 departments. We could win *all* the seats in the proletarian constituencies of Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Marseilles, and Aisne, and in a number of rural departments in the center and south. . . . Nor need we hesitate to invite other pro-Republic elements to join this fighting alliance, which, if they joined, would win in a majority of the constituencies." But the official contacts among M. Mendès-France, M. Guy Mollet of the Socialist Party, M. Mitterand of the UDSR and M. Chabtan-Delmas of the ex-Gaullists, enable one to predict that for this election Leftist alliances with the Communists are excluded. This certainly is the view of M. Guy Mollet, leader of the Socialists of "united Europe" tendency. There are, of course, the Socialist federations on the department level, and individual Socialist militants as well, who are inclined to team up with the Communists (for example, in Ardennes, Aisne, Côtes du Nord, Dordogne, Var, Landes). But how are they going to go about doing so? The electoral law makes it difficult if not impossible.

One unknown in the present situation is the kind of electoral discipline that can be expected within the Moderate bloc. The early reports on this point are positive. On December 2 the leaders of three groups—the Independents, the Peasants, and the Republican and Social Action group—agreed to combine their lists. Traditionally, however, the moderate candidates are the hardest to keep in line, and the moderate voters the most likely not to show up on election day.

I see three possible results of this election:

1. A popular front wins. This seems improbable.

2. The moderate bloc wins, with a majority sufficient to carry out the constitutional reform that M. Faure and the moderate groups alike favor: automatic dissolution and a new election if a premier is overthrown in the first two years of a Chamber's life. This would end the perennial French problem of governmental instability.

3. A moderate majority wins, but too weak to carry out the now indispensable reform, and too weak to form a firm government. This would mean a new period during which the new Chamber, like the one just sent home, would be impotent and sterile.

### The Boating Picnic

*To the first person submitting a correct answer to this puzzle, in a letter postmarked from anywhere in Connecticut,* NATIONAL REVIEW *will send a long-playing, twelve-inch recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 1 in D Major. The solution will appear next week.*

Four girls accompanied their fathers and mothers on a boating picnic. Four boats were available, and it was arranged that each man should take charge of one boat and take with him in turn the wife of one of his friends and the daughter of another, and that no two women should be together in a boat more than once.

Before lunch Smith had Mrs. Brown in his boat, and after lunch Brown took Miss Smith in his boat. The picnic was a great success until after tea, when Smith's boat collided with Robinson's and Miss Brown was thrown into the water. Who were the companions of Jones on each of the three occasions on which he took out a boat?



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# The THIRD WORLD WAR

JAMES BURNHAM

## *The Better to Eat You With, My Dear*

In his article on French North Africa, which NATIONAL REVIEW published three weeks ago, Mr. J. Dervin posed a question that so naturally arises from events as to make it odd that our accepted commentators have not been discussing it. "Has sufficient attention been paid," Mr. Dervin asked, "to Mr. Nehru's recent trip to Moscow? . . . Will Nehru not have been tempted to promise his support to Russian policy in Africa in exchange for protection against China, whose growing power India, and for that matter the USSR, fear with good reason?"

Mr. Dervin wrote just prior to the Bulganin-Khrushchev visit to India and prior also to the announcement that Communist arms were to be supplied to Egypt. What has been happening thus adds weight to his conjecture. India, moreover, made no adverse comment on the arms deal with Egypt, although in the past she has usually been quick to spot motes in Moslem eyes. The spectacular, officially stimulated welcome to the Soviet leaders was prelude to a joint pronouncement on world affairs, a trade agreement and a declaration of Soviet-Indian political solidarity. In the UN, India's Krishna Menon found that Moscow had "responded magnificently" to the challenge of the package deal.

Let us modify slightly Mr. Dervin's formulation: May not Nehru in Moscow have *offered* India's support on Africa—and other matters—in exchange for a Soviet *promise* of protection against China, backing on Kashmir and economic aid.

## *Too Much and Too Soon*

The Soviet-Indian courtship, especially the peripatetic dance of Bulganin-Khrushchev, has provoked our spokesmen, private and official, to pained indignation—though it is hard to see why anyone should be very much surprised. Thousands of editorials, lamenting or denouncing Nehru's loose behavior, have insisted that "we must do something about it." Do what, exactly? Well, there is vagueness on all points but one: that lots of money must be spent.

The Italian sociologist, Vilfredo Pareto, analyzed with care and wit what he called the "residue of combinations." One form of this residue is the instinctual feeling of most human beings that they must "do something" about any troublesome situation that arises, even when they do not in the least comprehend the situation and have no ground for believing that what they "do" will improve it. Thus, when someone takes suddenly sick in the household, we rush around with advice, salves and pills that for all we really know may make the illness worse. Similarly, everyone contributes to organizations professing as their aim racial equality, civil liberties, the cure of juvenile delinquency or what not, without the slightest scientific basis for supposing that the real activities of these organizations contribute to the furtherance of their professed goals, and indeed without a clear realization of what the goals themselves entail. So may it be with India.

Why not do nothing about India? In these days of united nations and human equality, we normally assume that we have got to meddle in everything everywhere. But to do nothing, although no doubt "a moral abdication" of the deepest dye, remains a logically possible, if unmentioned, alternative.

By "nothing" I mean, more precisely, "nothing special," nothing beyond what the actual situation calls for as an obvious, sensible minimum. That is: open recognition that India is for the time being grazing on the other side of the fence; maintenance of correct but cold diplomatic relations; no government relations beyond the diplomatic minimum—no "aid," military, technical, economic or any other, no gifts, handouts, loans or favors; jealous watch over the rights of American citizens if these are at issue; official indifference to business relations that private citizens and corporations may choose to have on their own responsibility with the Indians. To this list I would append: a discreetly friendly, even active relation with those Indians (of whom there are not a few) who are opposed to their government's present pro-Soviet orientation.

## *Friendship for Friends*

What else, really, is there to do except nothing (as so defined)? Does anyone propose that we should go to war with India, or institute gravely injurious sanctions against her? No one. Will it do any good to talk to Nehru in order to "explain" his errors to him, to send grain and tools and money and know-how, to flatter India or scold her? All such moves have been amply tried to no gain or purpose. Therefore, why not relax for a while? The results can't be any worse.

India has two neighbors, north and south, who extended to the Soviet road company no invitations for local stopovers. Off India's southern tip lies the green island of Ceylon, at the center of a most strategic wheel, with the world's finest natural harbor and land enough for several worrisome air fields. Ceylon's present chief—Sir John Kotelewala—is a man who has proved his anti-Communism in courageous personal exploit as well as by official word and deed. To India's north is Pakistan, which has not been afraid to assert its independence of Moscow. Pakistan has brave soldiers, and plains, guarded by a great mountain barrier, from which stratospheric bombers would be within easy range of the whole center and rear of Soviet power. Each squadron in Pakistan would compel Moscow to divert a wing from the West.

Half the attention, courtesy and resources that we have been pouring on India would be enough to back a serious approach to Pakistan and Ceylon. Or does a nation have to go to bed with Moscow in order to stir our interest?

It is not impossible, of course, that India itself might find us more attractive if more indifferent.



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# From the Academy

RUSSELL KIRK

## *Ph.D's for Everybody?*

"The problem of the age," Newman wrote more than a hundred years ago, "is the education of the masses, and literature and science cannot give the answer." That problem is now so acute that some people have suggested it can best be solved by conferring the degree of Ph.D. on every infant at birth, and so saving him from the boondoggle which too commonly has become "education" in America.

Approximately 2,839,000 students enrolled in universities, colleges and professional schools in the fall of 1955 —an increase of more than 100,000 over last year's enrollment. This is about one-third of the total number of people in this country between the ages of 18 and 21: a proportion higher by far than that in any other country. The Federal Office of Education has predicted a further increase amounting to 36 per cent during the next decade—which would mean an enrollment of more than 3,500,000 by 1965. Approximately 55 per cent of the 1955 enrollment is in state or other public institutions, and 45 per cent in private institutions; the publicly supported colleges have increased much more rapidly since World War Two than have private institutions, the latter experiencing, indeed, an actual decrease in number of colleges, although not an absolute decrease in total enrollments. Some educational administrators predict that as many as one-third of the private colleges will have ceased to exist by 1965. (President Coons of Occidental College, writing in the latest number of the *Association of American Colleges Bulletin*, comments that "Some public university spokesmen speak as if they were supremely confident of the outcome in their favor. They should be warned against arrogance and pride. They would do better to take a more inclusive view.")

In some states—notably Arizona and Nevada—only state-supported institutions of higher education exist; in others, the proportion of students in private colleges has sunk toward insignificance. Although state and municipal institutions enjoy a comparative prosperity, the national prosperity is not shared by many private institutions, for inflation, income and inheritance taxes and increased costs have affected both their endowments and their current income. Even famous universities like Leland Stanford and Johns Hopkins are severely pinched now, so that sometimes their instructors are paid smaller salaries than those paid to beginning teachers in public schools.

## *Incomes Rose More than College Costs*

The costs to students in our colleges, though rising steadily since 1900 in a moderate curve, have not increased in proportion to the increase of incomes in the United States. During the past fifteen years, average family incomes have increased by 150 per cent; while costs of attending college have increased by only 75 per cent. Much of this comparative reduction in costs has been achieved by sacrificing the interest of the college teacher, and often the quality (or at least the individuality) of instruction. The average college teacher has several times as many students as he did a generation or two since; while his income, during the past twenty-five years, has increased only one-sixth as much as that of the average American. At the beginning of this century a professor stood among the very well-to-do of this country; he now ranks, often, with semi-skilled laborers; and at the same time his leisure has greatly decreased —this in a half-century which has seen the working-hours of manual laborers decreased by as much as 50 per cent.

These statistics suggest that the quantitative growth of higher education has been achieved at the expense of quality. And even the statistics of quantitative growth do not serve as accurate measurements of accomplishment. Of the 1,847 "institutions of higher learning" listed by the United States Office of Education, only some 650 are true colleges or universities, if junior colleges, and most normal and technical schools, are excluded. More than 80 per cent of all students attend universities and colleges with an enrollment of more than a thousand—with, perhaps, a consequent loss of the individuality and companionship of the old-fashioned small American college. The greatest recent increase in enrollments, moreover, has been experienced by the junior colleges and teachers' colleges, rather than by the universities and liberal-arts colleges. And among these latter, standards vary immensely, from the intensive intellectual disciplines of the University of Chicago to the "getting along with people" objective of some popular state institutions and women's colleges. Of the orderly, compact, traditional university on the European pattern, few examples survive in America—Princeton being perhaps the best specimen left.

American higher education, then, is experiencing what some educators call "the rising tide," the submerging of traditional institutions and tastes by a great wave of population and economic aggrandizement. The causes are several. The rapid growth of population, which will be even more pronounced when the phenomenal number of children born during World War Two begins to affect the colleges, is only the most conspicuous factor. A second influence has been the increase of family income. A third has been the demand for scientific, technical, and specialized training, particularly in the fields of engineering and industrial management. A fourth has been "social advancement"—the desire of young people, and their parents, to obtain prestige and higher incomes through the acquiring of college degrees. The first three of these causes seem liable to continue in operation at least some years longer; the last cause possibly may become less influential as the old repute of a college degree wears thin, what with the commonness it is taking on and what with the lowering of academic standards. I hope to explore the consequences of these trends in the near future.



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# ARTS and MANNERS

WILLIAM S. SCHLAMM

For several months I, together with millions of other naive citizens, have been told by the breathless cultural supplements of the Liberal press that Mr. Otto Preminger, one of Hollywood's elder and more compromised statesmen, is taking a chance on his life in defense of ours. These stubborn rumors did not quite fit with the vague recollections I had of Mr. Preminger's deep respect for a buck, and his interest in the obscene; but they alerted even me for his heralded picture, *The Man With the Golden Arm*. The film having been shown at last, the suspense is ended and I can safely assure you that Mr. Preminger is still motivated by a deep respect for a buck and an interest in the obscene.

Now the rumors of heroism originated in the fact that Mr. Preminger, when he chose to film Mr. Nelson Algren's slightly putrid novel, knowingly defied Hollywood's Production Code: under that voluntary and embarrassingly futile instrument of self-policing, no Hollywood movie must depict drug addiction—which happens to be the only discernible theme of Mr. Algren's puerile exercise in realism. What made Mr. Preminger a hero in the eyes of the Liberal press was that he had presumably read the novel, and yet had brazenly applied for a seal of approval under the clear stipulations of the Code. This, in the eyes of everybody else, made him either a jackass or a calculating promoter; a jackass, if he really believed for a second that the duly sworn administrators of the Production Code *could* permit such a blatant violation; a calculating promoter, if he wanted the publicity value of the denial.

*The Man With the Golden Arm* is even duller as a film than it was as a novel, though every bit as "tough." At the peril of sounding less compassionate than I am, I must admit a yawning boredom with creatures so ape-like and yet so bored with the wonders of life that they get animated only when stung by a hypodermic needle. The man with the golden arm (played by Mr. Frank Sinatra as if he were singing one of his lousier bits of blues) is a professional card-dealer in a filthy floating game in Chicago, and a drug addict to boot. In short, a hero. And Mr. Preminger's idea was to entertain a paying audience with easy peeks at sin and horror, slightly embroidered by notions of Social Significance, which is a somewhat shameless but, on the whole, immensely effective trick in the field of mass communications. It is this trick, rather than the accidental film, that I want to contemplate. And because there comes in the life of every writer a moment when he craves sociological lingo, I propose to call it the Wechsler Syndrome.

It is of course the *New York Post* where one can most satisfactorily study the workings of the James Wechsler Syndrome, which operates according to what I'd like to call the Wechsler Law of Gravity: the higher the standards of Social Significance, the lower the necklines. That is, if only the caption underneath deplores her inadequate take-home pay, the snapshot of the chorus girl above may outdo what the frankest tabloid would not dare publish. Thus, since that learned Social Reformer, Mr. James Wechsler, became its editor, the *New York Post* has developed, clearly, into the most lurid product of lowdown journalism—and by "lurid" I don't mean so much its editorial position as its fascination with the lascivious. Mr. Earl Wilson's gossip column is (at least within my admittedly limited knowledge) indubitably the smuttiest effort in the trade; the special features of the *Post*, particularly its serialized "circulation builders," reek of the gamiest odors; and Professor Max Lerner celebrates on its editorial pages the most boring black masses in the worship of Dr. Kinsey. The paper, in short, is determined to improve the flavor of living, if only according to Mr. Wechsler's somewhat flattened (or, rather, inflated) notions of the true and, especially, the beautiful. We are all, I presume, in the position of the reluctant screen writer in the old Hollywood story who, one will recall, was threateningly told by the C. P. pitchman that, come the revolution, he would eat and *like* strawberries and cream ("you miserable Trotskyite, you"). Come Mr. Stevenson, one is very much afraid, we will all *have* to like Mr. Wilson's *semi-entendres* and the more stereoscopic views of Miss Dainty Dimples.

Now it is of course possible that Mr. Wechsler simply goes by his personal tastes and preferences, but this would merely prove that he is the ideal editor for a Left-wing newspaper. However, the relevant point is not Mr. Wechsler's tastes but the indigenous esthetics of the *New York Post*. Any newspaper that peddles Progressivism, I contend, proceeds on the same image of Common Man—the image of a degenerate who can be shaken out of his stupor, and mobilized toward Progressive Goals, only by the vilest blows at his sensory system. Nowhere in creation can you encounter so low an opinion of Common Man as on the Left; while the conservative, naturally, is motivated by a moderate faith in the potential qualities of the individual. Consequently, even if Mr. Wechsler happened to love Manet he would have to serve the lowest grade cheesecake.

As a student of the Left, I am fascinated by the *New York Post's* performance which, on the whole, I find superbly attuned to its objective. It is edited with a truly remarkable contempt for the intelligence and the tastes of Mass Man, and with the kind of sophistication which comes from despising one's self. As to the artifacts of Mr. Otto Preminger, my admiration for him is less enthusiastic, mainly because he displays less contempt for his audience than Mr. Wechsler has for his and, consequently, sometimes gets lost in an honest exertion of his own taste. Even so, I would strongly advise all true students of Hollywood arts and national manners to keep their eyes on Mr. Preminger. He, if anyone, knows the lucrative aspects of the lurid; and, if anything, he knows on which side his meringue is buttered. *The Man With the Golden Arm* has been called "rare art" by the *New York Herald Tribune* whose critic, I sincerely hope, was under the influence of a potent drug when he wrote these findings. Not even the producer's impudence is rare. It is simply the gall of all successful manipulators of mass communications to kick their audience either in the brains or in the solar plexus.



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# BOOKS IN REVIEW

## A Man of Destiny: Pierre Lecomte du Nouy

ISABEL PATERSON

It was said of Edmund Burke that if one had met him, unknown, taking shelter from the rain under a shed, one would have thought: "This is an extraordinary man." . . . In the office where I worked, another woman whose desk stood nearer the door enquired: "Do you mind telling me who was your caller, the man who just went out?" I told her, and added: "Why did you ask?" She had never before put such a question. She said: "I was sure he was somebody."

That was Pierre Lecomte du Nouy. To describe such a man is all the more difficult. Details do not convey the impression of active intellect, intense vitality and unaffected charm, which were borne out by the diversity of his talents and accomplishments. His life is equally impossible to summarize. The one who knew him best, his wife, has told the story as briefly as it can be done (*The Road to "Human Destiny,"* by Mary Lecomte du Nouy, Longmans Green, $5.00), exquisitely economical in three hundred odd pages, a portrait in silver point. Given only the space of a review, what can be said? A friend declared that "he was twenty men rolled into one." Nevertheless, he exhibited a rare consistency, and in the end a clear pattern emerges. Even his two ambitions were interwoven; he wished to make a lasting contribution to human progress, and to realize a great love, and his various and brilliant gifts were brought together to serve both purposes.

A thorough Frenchman, born in Paris, and bred in a milieu of the arts, letters and learned professions, at eighteen he was a cowboy in Texas. Had he lived in the seventeenth century, surely he would have left his name on the map of North America as one of the famous French explorers. As it was, he went home and at twenty-two graduated from the Sorbonne, a licentiate in law. He then became secretary to Aristide Briand. Among his early friends were Guy de Maupassant, Buffalo Bill and Maurice Maeterlinck! He wrote fiction and plays, he made a hit as an actor, and declined to follow it up. It was too easy. From boyhood he showed remarkable mechanical aptitude; obviously he could have made his fortune in machine industry. Instead, he used his talent to devise precision instruments for scientific research. He was an omnivorous reader; he was "serious" in the French sense of the word; he was a social favorite for his gaiety; the visible world delighted him; and he could live as a recluse for the sake of his work. He married (*en secondes noces*) an American girl, brought up mainly in Paris, who had not the slightest interest in science before she met Pierre Lecomte du Nouy. After their marriage, she became his laboratory assistant, translated his books, and proofread his technical articles.

Well, you see, it's not much use. Once I had an interview with the late Dr. Millikan, and we spoke of du Nouy. Dr. Millikan testified in the highest terms to du Nouy's standing as a scientist. But what really seemed to strike Millikan was du Nouy's perfect fluency in the American idiom, and the fact that he had written a best seller on a scientific subject.

The first World War started du Nouy on his scientific career, direct from the front line, where he fought with his regiment, the "Blue Devils." Visiting a military hospital, he met Carrel; and Carrel requested that du Nouy be assigned as a research assistant to aid in systematizing the Carrel-Dakin technique. Immediately after the war, du Nouy made his settled choice of science as a whole-time pursuit. Declining a definite offer of stardom in the movies, he preferred the glamor of the Rockefeller Institute and the fascinating question of surface tension of liquids. Concerning that subject, this reviewer knows less than a mosquito larva, which, I have been informed, is able to hang head down by its tail from the surface tension of the water. Pierre du Nouy would not have been annoyed by such a digression; he would have been amused. And it is not irrelevant, for his passionate preoccupation with science was always pointed to a *living* universe. Thus the phenomena of surface tension led him to study molecular action, which is the threshold where the difference becomes manifest between the inorganic and the organic.

All his scientific investigations ran *contra mundi,* clean contrary to the orthodoxy in science, which postulated a universe bound by the materialistic determinism of pure chance, and atheistic by necessity. Such indeed was the bleak climate of opinion enveloping the society in which he was reared, tempered only by lingering tradition and gentle manners. In his youth he accepted the materialistic view more or less passively—until he became a scientist, and his penetrating intelligence gradually converted him to an unshakable conviction that God exists and *acts* in a rational universe. His wit and humor helped him. The spectacle of scientists employing their minds to prove to other minds that there can be no such thing as a mind to recognize a proof, appealed to him as both comic and tragic, the ultimate paradox.

His faith in a rational order was justified in strange ways against heavy odds. Though the Rockefeller Institute was reluctant to lose him, private con-



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siderations obliged him to return to France. There he was attached to the Pasteur Institute for nine years, until the position became untenable. Later he failed narrowly of election to the Collège de France. The cause of these reverses was simple. Scientific determinism has long been in course of transmutation into a political breed, the dogma of Communism. Too many scientists had gone to "the Left." Pierre du Nouy was marked as "a dangerous man"; he was an individualist. He must be stopped. (Here is an illuminating instance of the uses of endowed institutions and bureaucratic patronage.)

Briefly depressed, du Nouy quickly turned ill fortune into an opportunity. For several years he had been meditating a book which should give a new interpretation of the processes and meaning of evolution. Now he had time for it. By cutting him off from research, he remarked, his opponents "have succeeded in making me say what I think."

He headed straight for America and the West, where the very air revived his spirits "like champagne." In a cabin on the edge of the Grand Canyon he wrote the first draft of the original version of his book, three volumes in French, which subsequently was to be rewritten and condensed to one volume in English as *Human Destiny*. He took the manuscript back to France to finish it.

The rest of the story includes the desperate years of the second World War, the terror and heartbreak of France under German occupation, the Resistance, deadly danger and cold hunger, and all the while the book getting itself written—"a gleam in the darkness." In 1942, du Nouy and his wife contrived to escape to the United States. He had only five years left, but he lived to see *Human Destiny* in print, in both French and English, and a world-wide success. I am glad of that.

There is perennial incomprehension of what makes a "timely" book. Genuinely timely ideas are *new* ideas, counter to the fashion which has had its run. *Human Destiny* had a public unconsciously *waiting for it*. I was waiting for it consciously myself. When I was young I read Darwin's *Origin of Species*. I mean I actually read it. In spite of the tedious prose, it held my attention; and I was amazed at the conclusion, inasmuch as the chain of evidence had broken in two sharply just before the last link. The argument is that in the organic order species originate from elementary types by variations ( the variations are not accounted for, but are at least conceivable), and then by the survival of the variations best adapted to the environment. Adapted is the keyword.

But in fact the human species *does not* do anything of the kind; it survives by adapting the environment to human desires and needs. Please note that our bare needs don't comprise a strong enough motive for survival. We must desire something above and beyond animal existence, brute necessity. And the material technology of survival for humanity requires for its use at least elementary recognition of moral law.

So it was about time some scientist should observe the most conspicuous attribute of his own species. As a specimen, Charles Darwin himself is worthy of classification. Why did he spend three happy years being seasick on the *Beagle* and tramping from end to end of South America collecting bothersome specimens in vast quantities to make his cabin more uncomfortable, and then spend laborious years examining shells in the hope of discovering something about the universe which would be no help whatever to him in respect of his survival, and which unhappily has been so misconstrued as to put the rest of us in imminent peril of extinction? Apparently one reason he was dubious about design was the shape of his nose. Whenever he was almost ready to admit design in the universe, he backed off with the reflection that no rational scheme of things would have given him such a nose, nobody would have designed it.

Scientists are a very peculiar species indeed. It is even possible that they are human. I hope to go into that on some future occasion. Meanwhile, it always gives me pleasure to remember Alexander Agassiz. He, Alexander, to the bitter end didn't subscribe to Darwin's theory. And he went to Africa and observed giraffes. Darwin had theorized that giraffes got their long necks by way of adaptation to browsing off tall trees. All the giraffes Alexander Agassiz observed—all, without exception—were browsing from low shrubs.

As I said before, we get along somehow, scientists included, by adapting the facts to our own wishes. At least, we have so far; I hope we haven't run out our string, now that the scientists have gratified their wish for atom bombs. Their projects to adapt us to the bomb aren't attractive. "Every social order derives its sanctions from the prevailing conception of the cosmic order." This flash of intuitive genius and perfect phrasing must be credited to Admiral Ben Moreell. Communism derives from the imagined cosmic order of mechanistic determinism. The result is civilization in ruins. Many scientists nevertheless cling to mechanistic determinism as a description of the macrocosm, but they add to it the microcosm of atomic physics, which is ruled by pure chance. These are not offered as alternatives, but as two aspects of the universe, although the scientists themselves say there is no connection between them, and yet one is supposed to be the substance of the other. After destruction, chaos. In short, modern science gives us no cosmos whatever. What social order can derive from that? Nothing from nothing.

What du Nouy was driving at was a conception of the universe *as an instrument of value*. And that is the one thing we know about it for certain, by direct experience of the part of it which we inhabit. It is also the one thing that scientists hitherto have positively refused to take into account. They say, in effect, they can't measure "value"; but they also imply that whatever they cannot measure doesn't exist, or cannot be admitted by science. Is that true? It is possible to build a motor car. Yet value and design enter into it, and it does not run of itself, but by purpose and direction. And that is what we know and all we know about mechanism.

Well, here is another book, *Science and Christian Belief*, by C. A. Coulson (Chapel Hill, $2.50), which has been awarded the Pierre Lecomte du Nouy Prize for this year. I regret that I cannot quite see why. The argument runs, as nearly as I can make it out—Professor Coulson's statements have something of the fuzziness of the Eddington school—that scientists really don't know what they are talking about anyhow; and we may validate religion by our emotions toward the universe,



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and by personal religious experience. Doubtless that will reassure those who feel so already; it will not answer the need of a cosmos. If it be objected that the human mind cannot hope to comprehend the universe completely, I must reply that *complete* understanding is not required, only a general and rational notion of an actual (not contradictory) universe, which modern science denies. I cannot but think that a better choice might have been *The Biology of the Spirit*, by Edmund W. Sinnott (Viking, $3.50). Professor Sinnott, a biologist, has begun to suspect that the Second Law of Thermodynamics may not be the first and last law of the universe. Life doesn't obey it. There is, he confesses, "a tendency toward organization." I suggest that there is a tendency to organization even in the inorganic order. I was just wondering when some scientist would notice that. A few more books looking in this direction, and we may begin to hope for a rational society.

## Normanesque Rhetoric

**A Chronicle of Jeopardy, 1945-1955,** by Rexford G. Tugwell. 488 pp. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. $7.50

Of the various false rhetorics which assail us today, one of the hardest to take with an even stomach is the Normanesque. Originally developed by Norman Corwin in his canticles of the New Deal and the People's Front, it was brought to its present blatant pitch by Norman Cousins as a vehicle for the revivalism of atomic apocalypse and of world-government salvation.

*A Chronicle of Jeopardy* is something of a masterpiece of this style. Long, ponderous, inspirational, inchoate, it pounds away at its message without subtlety or change of pace. Each of the ten sections into which the book is divided was purportedly written on an anniversary of the explosion of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima. Each anniversary is the occasion for a passionate, if rambling, discourse on the events of the year; and every one of the ten years is presented as overshadowed in every moment by a consuming fear of "the Bomb." But it is unnecessary fear. To exorcise it, all that is needed is collectivization on a world scale—a reform long overdue in any case.

"The condition of surviving at all into the future had now for several decades clearly been that we should collectivize and plan." With the discovery of nuclear power, "the greatest of all dangers to man—that his inventions may destroy him because he will not acknowledge their nature and shape his society to their requirements . . ." became a terrifying and immediate crisis. "We now had, at once, to acknowledge that individualism, competition, private initiative, and production only for profit were as destructive as tigers loose in a circus crowd. We could only live on in our world if we collectivized, cooperated, produced for use, shared with one another."

And this surrender of principle and intelligence in political, economic and social matters to the dictation of material forces, to the "indicated collectivism of the nuclear age," must be world-wide in scope. It is a world government that is to be the organ for "the control of the group mind over social action." "Obsolete competitive nationalism lasting on into an age of one-world technology might well exact the penalty for absolute incompatibility."

At least it must be said for Mr. Tugwell that he is quite straightforward about his collectivism. He is still the fighting planner of his early New Deal days. There is nothing of the new mode of Liberal, patined over with a "conservative" mood, about him, and that is rather refreshing these days. If only he did not write in that fearful pseudo-prophetic style!

FRANK S. MEYER


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## Brilliant Chapter

**Integrated Europe?**, by Michael T. Florinsky. 182 pp. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50

Mr. Florinsky has written a brilliant chapter on the course of European affairs. There are, to be sure, factors which he does not discuss: His analysis of economic, military and political integration, though extremely interesting, does not lead to a solution of the over-all problem in western Europe, namely: Will western Europe be Communist or anti-Communist? It is all right to talk about all the various organizations with a lot of alphabetical details, but that is not going to solve the problem. The problem, to paraphase Lincoln, is whether western Europe wishes to be slave or free.

Mr. Florinsky's book undoubtedly was written prior to the two Geneva conferences in 1955. Those conferences did much to disintegrate western Europe because of the atmosphere they developed, which gave people in France and Italy the impression that integration, especially of the military type, was no longer necessary. This assumption may have been unwarranted, but it certainly prevailed among the French and Italian people, and especially among members of the respective Parliaments. It has enabled the Communist parties in both countries to argue against further appropriations for NATO participation.

All in all, however, this is an excellent book, which deserves to be read by all persons interested in a strong western Europe and in the problem of aid to Europe. But I think more emphasis should have been put on the Communist danger. ARTHUR BLISS LANE

## New Fairy Story

**The Mermaid Man: The Autobiography of Hans Christian Andersen,** a new abridged translation by Maurice Michael. 240 pp. New York: Library Publishers. $3.75

What we imprecisely call Fairy Tales were formally annexed to written literature early in the nineteenth century. As collected at their oral, folk-level source by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, they were not stories *for* children so much as stories in which



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human experience is beheld *by* children, and in which everything that happens is subject to more comprehensive laws than those of logic, logarithms, dialectic and common sense.

By the end of the century, the appeal of fairy stories to sophisticated nostalgia for innocence was so great that they were honestly, if self-consciously, imitated by the very unchildlike Oscar Wilde. And since then, with diminishing conviction and returns, they have been imitated by a wide variety of writers from James Thurber to C. S. Lewis to Al Capp.

Between the Grimm brothers and Oscar Wilde there lived a very unique Dane named Hans Christian Andersen. Born in 1805, the son of a poor cobbler, he amounts to a sort of "missing link" in the fairy tale's emergence. As a writer, he was shrewd and knowing enough to make himself a successful career. But as a human being, he remained a genuine, undeliberate child all of his life. His best writing therefore combines the clarity of the really "innocent eye" with the formal art necessary for a satisfying story. Inadvertently, and in a very exact sense, he was what Daisy Ashford was hailed as being a century later: the perfect child writer.

Besides his fairy stories (as well as many novels, verse tragedies and travel books), he wrote an autobiography, and as one might safely predict, it is—not bad, not even uninteresting, just inadequate. After all, a child looks *out* at the world, not *in* at himself, and of all literary forms the autobiography requires the greatest inward, personal perspective. To expect a real autobiography from Andersen would be as wrong-headed as asking Pascal to write "The Snow Queen."

What we get in *The Mermaid Man* is a further fairy story, about a frail, unpromising little boy who plays with dolls, weeps easily, and at fourteen goes quixotically off to Copenhagen to make his fortune. People laugh at him. He tries to sing, dance, act, all with no success. Then he begins to write. And suddenly, improbably, he wakes up one fine day to find people calling him a poet. The Ugly Duckling has become a Swan. But if any explanation is needed of the how or why, his own testimonial is the last place to look for it.

ROGER BECKET

# Fatal Cure

**The Church In Our Town: The church's place in the rural community today—its problems and its opportunities,** by Rockwell C. Smith. 220 pp. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press. **$2.50.**

The first two chapters of this "revised and enlarged" edition of Dr. Smith's influential book briefly describe what the author means by rural. Basing the sketch upon his own experience and upon the standing operating procedures and texts of the sociologists, the author shows that the pattern of rural life, despite the pressure of technology and urbanization, still tends to contrast with that of urban society in important and fairly well-known ways. Among other things, he thinks, it tends to develop a different hierarchy of values.

The author, a former country pastor who is now professor of rural church administration and sociology at Garrett Biblican Institute, assures us: "I shall insist that the work of the church is to safeguard and conserve what is essentially rich in this rural way of life, while it amends and redeems whatever is evil."

The definite viewpoint expressed in the book, however, and the voluminous specific advice it offers to the new country pastor (or politician or salesman, for that matter) develop a pattern of the centralized, mass-industrial welfare state which is "urban" according to the author's own definition, and flatly opposed to what he classifies as "rural."

In the most general and root terms he gives us, what are his faith and hope in rural living?

"Illuminating studies," we are told, "indicate that only half our farm boys and girls can remain on the farms if farms of adequate and economic size are to be available to them."

What kind of farms, for what purpose? And what is the meaning of "adequate and economic"?

Does he mean that it would be impossible for *more* boys and girls to live there, with food, shelter and clothing? Or does it mean partly that, but to a disturbing degree this other: that the most complete exploitation of the country's resources and the scientifically highest possible "standard of living" for the whole nation would be more difficult to achieve given current ways of doing things, if half of our boys and girls ceased to leave the land for city industry?

The book retails a common historical observation: "In the early nineteenth century it required nine farm families to feed one city family." But someone who wanted to conserve rural values might state the evidence behind this statement in this very different way: "In the early nineteenth century only one city family supplied nine farm families with all the goods and services they required from outside their homes and rural communities."

Finally, Dr. Smith announces without demur that, "The American farmer came out of the Second World War with a dependence upon mechanization and commercialization which tied him for good or ill to the general commercial life of the nation and world. For most farmers, the old semisubsistence type of independent agriculture is gone forever."

Attempts to discover the impulses and concepts that lie behind the author's negative judgments on the possibilities and value of rural life must be tentative. Perhaps the main thing is simple boredom with an unfashionable environment. But perhaps also the minister has lost interest in the creed and specific content of religion. Religion and church appear as an undifferentiated "service" to mankind, and the pastor simply cooperates in work for a "mature structure of personality" and for the formation of "personality in terms of cosmic or universal loyalties"—which, incidentally, he leaves undefined.

This transcendental ambiguity might result in a frantic urge for justification by welfare. This leads to an attempt to objectify personal and social welfare in measurable, physical terms. Vision of the common good is lost in concentration upon the more easily advertised imperatives of the common need.

Then comes the cosmopolitan wave of scientific super-utilitarianism: the earth and all that's on it—including the population—are to be rationalized by the fanciest current engineering theories and methods to obtain maximum production and consumption with minimum friction. This is to bring the highest and most equal "standard of living," to which a man



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of good will is basically committed.

The author's utopian views on the unified, industrial, welfare state, and his pessimistic estimate of rural capabilities and values could arouse much stubborn argument. For what *The Church In Our Town* teaches is that "the church's place in the rural community today" is to cooperate in eliminating what remains of the rural community.

PHILIP BURNHAM

## Misunderstood Man

**Jefferson Davis: American Patriot, 1808-1861,** by Hudson Strode. 460 pp. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $6.75

This is the first of two volumes in which Hudson Strode attempts to interpret anew the character of Jefferson Davis, termed by some "the most misunderstood man in history."

Whether or not this description is merited, there are facts about Davis' career that deserve to be better known, and Mr. Strode sets them forth in an appealing combination of history and biography. Many Southern leaders have been accused of insularity, but Davis had a relatively wide background. He was a student at Transylvania and a cadet at West Point; he served for five years on the then extremely primitive Northwestern frontier; he learned plantation management under the tutelage of his highly successful brother Joseph Emory Davis; he fought in the Mexican War and he visited Cuba; he knew official Washington well both as legislator and as a Cabinet member; and he spent a summer in New England. On comparison, it appears that he had seen a good bit more of the world than his opponent Abraham Lincoln.

Davis was never an ardent secessionist. On the contrary, he was, like Lee, a "Union man," though not at any price. He was among the last to abandon hope of compromise.

Wherever he went, his bearing attracted notice, and no one could make a more graceful speech. The careful reader of his rhetoric will hardly fail to detect a Wilsonian ring. An examination might show that the idealisms of the two men were much alike.

These facts have caused historians and biographers from James Ford Rhodes down to the present to say that Jefferson Davis was the best equipped man in the South for the post that devolved upon him. This is true if one assumes that the presidency of the Southern states was a routine job, like being United States Senator or Secretary of War, which it definitely was not. He might have been a good helmsman for calm seas. But Davis had thrust upon him the leadership of a counter-revolution. He was neither bold enough nor creative enough to devise policies where strong revolutionary currents were running. His mind handled large, abstract ideas impressively well, but it lacked natural shrewdness. He did not have the necessary realistic—one is tempted to say sardonic—grasp of human motives. His gentility seemed to encase him. Finally, there is strong evidence throughout his record of a tendency to psychosomatic illness.

In this volume Mr. Strode has written an engaging narrative of his years up to the presidency of the Southern Republic, but he seems not to have penetrated to the weaknesses of one of history's tragic figures.

RICHARD M. WEAVER

# To the Editor

It is natural enough, I suppose, that everyone interested in NATIONAL REVIEW thinks he has a better idea of what it ought to be than the editors. (Much as I like the way it is shaping up, I am sure I have subterranean notions of the same kind myself.) And, of course, a good many of the suggestions made are good ones; but there is one set of attitudes, which I have met too frequently for comfort, that very much disturbs me. It is the insistence, to put it bluntly, that the magazine publish nothing that makes serious intellectual demands upon the reader; that it conform to the slick and easy standards of predigested journalism.

I am sure you have heard such criticism in quantity. Well-intentioned though it is, I hope you will hold out against it, because I think it misses the main reason for NATIONAL REVIEW's existence. Partly it is the result of an impatient desire to skip a stage, to achieve a mass circulation for ideas that, unfortunately, are today in radical opposition to the established and influential consensus. And partly it is unconscious surrender to the anti-intellectuality of the social engineers, the "life-adjustment" boys, who fear like the plague clear and distinct values and critical judgments based upon them.

But we *are* an opposition, and we have to fight conformity, particularly the anti-intellectual conformity of the complacent manipulators. It is ideas they fear, for in the end it is ideas which are decisive. It was ideas developed in the *Nation* and the *New Republic* and the *Masses* thirty and forty years ago that seduced a generation and laid the foundations for the New Deal and what has followed. The circulations of these magazines were not large, but they spoke to the younger generation, in and out of the universities, and won them—with devastating effect.

There is another younger generation today, intellectually alive and hungry, dissatisfied with the arid conformity of what is offered them. They are looking for solid principle and critical analysis of error. These are the people NATIONAL REVIEW must reach, or there isn't a great deal of point in publishing it at all. They will not be satisfied with simple intonations of truths, however sound, or with slick run-downs, however "sophisticated." They want substantial intellectual food, and you can give it to them. You can make a magazine that no honest person interested in ideas can afford to miss, and with it turn the tide at the key point which determines everything else.

You're on the way to doing it. Don't give up the ship.

*Woodstock, N. Y.* FRANK S. MEYER

Very gratified to see your literate yet vital voice of the right. Am sure there are many more like myself who've been pining away amid the pale progressivism of the anemic leadership of both the little leftists and the little rightists. . . . What relief to gain refuge from the dead center of indiscriminate do-goodism and the "trivial optimism" of our progressive preachers!

*Denver, Col.* J. S. ELMORE



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